Week ending July 21 1951 Every Wednesday Fourpence

John Bull

Harry Hopkins reports from the Far East

LIONEL GAMLIN, TEENAGERS' FAVOURITE

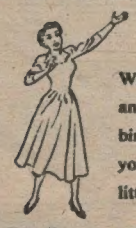
[Every Trade Advertisement Guaranteed]

What's today!

Whiffs day

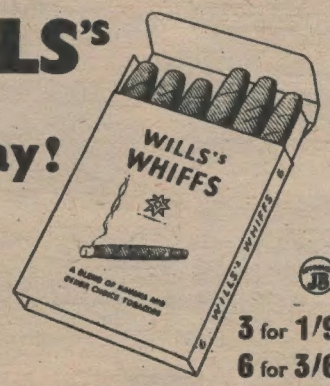
Whatever makes you think Wills's Whiffs are a treat reserved for special occasions? Can't be the price—you get three of these grand little cigars for only 1/9. Must be that you enjoy Wills's Whiffs so much that you put them in the luxury class. So they are—for satisfaction; but they're a luxury any man can afford any day.

Give me WILLS's WHIFFS any day!



LISTEN—LADIES!

When he says "Give me Wills's Whiffs any day" he doesn't mean just his birthday or Xmas. He means whenever you think (or he thinks!) he deserves a little present—from you.



3 for 1/9
6 for 3/6

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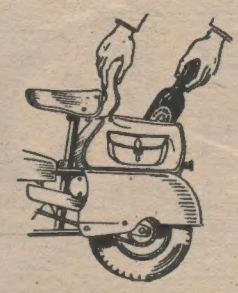

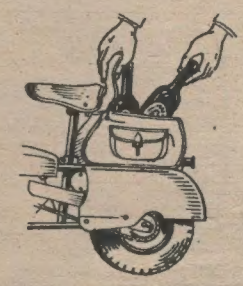

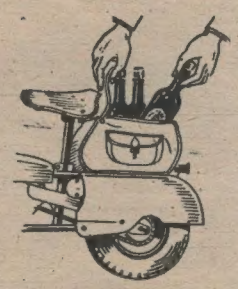

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FOREST BROWN ALE
WHITBREAD'S STOUT

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oh-oh Dry Scalp!

YES, Dry Scalp's his trouble. Anyone can see that! Dry, lifeless, untidy hair. That "never-saw-a-comb" look. Flakes of dandruff in the parting and on his shoulder. It's about time someone told him about 'Vaseline' Brand Hair Tonic!

THAT'S BETTER — his hair looks well-groomed all day now. It's amazing how much better your hair looks, astonishing how much better your scalp feels when you end Dry Scalp with 'Vaseline' Hair Tonic. The daily 20-second massage works wonders — and you only need to use a few drops, for a little of this pure hair tonic and dressing goes a long way.

Vaseline* HAIR TONIC

THE DRESSING THAT ENDS DRY SCALP

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* "Vaseline" is the registered trade mark of the Chesebrough Mfg. Co. Ltd

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EDITORIAL

Football's money muddles must be settled

THERE IS STILL TIME before the football season starts next month to clear up some of the money muddles which are bedevilling the national winter game.

Sooner or later the two main questions will have to be answered:

Should the players get a bigger share of the wealth which their personalities and skill bring in?

And is it not possible to reach a really full settlement of the perpetual dispute between the B.B.C. and the football chiefs?

At present nobody is satisfied. In a sport which has become Big Business players' rewards are artificially limited. There are no "star" salaries; there is very little security.

Yet transfer fees soar to outrageous heights. A £20,000 fee is no longer startling, but the player does not benefit from the big cheque which passes between the two clubs.

Nobody has ever contended that professionalism is good for sport—but its evils are now being multiplied unnecessarily. How can a player be expected to give of his best when he knows, on his first appearance after a five-figure transfer, that his employers and the fans are expecting him automatically to deliver a vast money's worth of football?

Moreover, the transfer system penalizes the poorer clubs, who can never hope to compete for front-rank players.

There is every reason for reforming the transfer system—if only by setting a limit to the maximum fee—and a strong case for giving players more generous pay. The quality of football does not appear to suffer in countries where they are more lavishly rewarded. South American sides have trounced our best, and we can no longer count on victory anywhere in Europe.

UNTIL these matters have been settled in a way that rests the consciences of all concerned with football there will be little public sympathy with the rulers of the game in their battle against what they regard as the menace of radio and television.

The public wants broadcasts and telecasts of important matches. There is no doubt whatever about the radio audience for such a game as the F.A. Cup Final, which can be watched at Wembley by no more than 100,000 people out of millions interested.

The supposed clash of interests comes over the question of regular broadcasting of League and minor cup matches.

The argument of the football kings has been: if we allow the B.B.C. to put those on the air, gates will drop and we shall be on the road to ruin. Not only will people stay at home who would have attended the matches but others, too, will choose to sit by their radios rather than go to *their* local games.

Obviously the football industry—for that is what it has become—could not stand serious and increasing inroads on its revenues. The fear that a habit of home-watching and listening might grow is understandable.

But that, with all respect to the Football League, has never been a good argument for banning all broadcasts out of hand. It *has* always been an argument for coming to a sensible arrangement with the B.B.C.

OUR football chiefs, unfortunately, have been frightened by what has happened in America. There, intercollegiate football takes the place of our League football, and many universities enjoy huge incomes from gate money. Broadcasts of the big games—particularly on television—have affected attendances so much that twenty-four smaller colleges find that it no longer pays them to compete in intercollegiate competitions.

But there is an important difference between the American and British football publics. In America television is more widespread and the radio listening habit far more ingrained than in Britain.

The mainstay of British football is the man who pays the minimum price to stand on the terraces of his local football ground and shout his heart out on a Saturday afternoon.

No broadcast, either of television or sound radio, will replace for him the thrills of going to a match.

So the British League clubs, as long as they offer skilled, lively football with plenty of excitement and goals, need never fear that their turnstiles will stop clicking. To the fans here, the weekly game is a prized outing as well as a sporting spectacle.

But, if clubs were right in their fear of losing even a little paying support, the remedy would not be to ban the B.B.C. engineers from their grounds.

The football industry should put its own house in order, and it should make sure that differences of view with the B.B.C. are fully thrashed out and sensible solutions arrived at. And though the B.B.C. should not—and cannot—be compared with America's sponsored radio, it, too, has some facing of facts to do.

What remains of greatest importance is that the public should have freedom of choice in this matter—to go to matches or to follow football at home.

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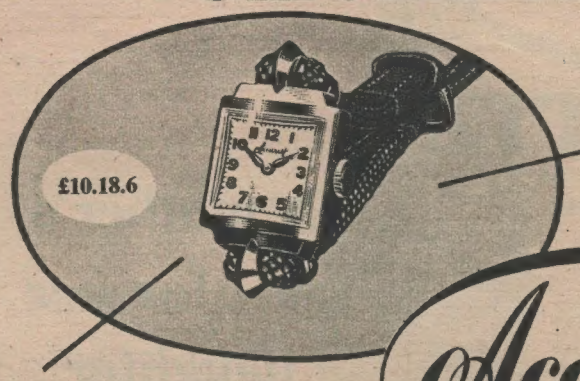

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July 21, 1951 VOL. 90 No. 2351 PHONE: TEMPLE BAR 2468 GRAMS: HEROICALLY, WESTCENT, LONDON

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APPLE BEVERAGE

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Obtainable from your usual supplier in flagon-size bottles.

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ATTLEBOROUGH & LONDON

A cut finger—and dinner not ready!

But with a Dalmas first-aid dressing you can cook in comfort

THE busy housewife can't take time off for minor injuries—that's why it's wise to keep a tin of Dalmas handy. These unique dressings stretch to fit in all directions, allowing for complete freedom of movement. Since they're waterproof and won't fray or come off, you can get on with your tasks without noticing you're wearing one. Dalmas first-aid dressings are sold in 1/- tins. Dalmas strapping—without medicated pad—is 1/- a spool. It has 101 first-aid uses.

Look for the blue tin with the white hand

DALMAS
WATERPROOF
FIRST-AID DRESSINGS

FREE SPEECH

A mother's vow for her daughter

ELDEST OF FOUR DAUGHTERS, I was brought up very strictly. Until I was fourteen, I had to be up in the mornings by seven o'clock. Later, I was never allowed to go to the cinema, and never went to dances. I vowed when I got married that if I had children they should enjoy their youth better than I had.

I have kept to my vow: my seventeen-year-old daughter has every freedom and has never taken advantage of it. She never keeps anything from me, whereas as a teenager I had to be very deceitful at times. I have proved in my own life that so-called "strict" upbringing does not make for happiness.—MRS. W. H. JONES, Yorks.

Willing To Oblige

TRAVELLING on the London Underground, I noticed a "Keep Britain Tidy" poster [*see photograph*] in the carriage. I had an empty cigarette carton, and, heeding the request, looked around in vain for a receptacle. I had to retain the carton until I got out at a station. This must puzzle Festival visitors to London.—G. MAYELL, 27 Randolph Road, Southall, Middlesex.

London Transport comments: "Underground trains are designed as compactly as possible. The addition of litter baskets would cause obstruction to passengers. All stations have litter baskets. Discarded newspapers—the bulkiest litter—are cleared at terminals, and all trains are cleaned each day."

Baby-shifters

MY pride and excitement since the birth of our baby son are tempered with apprehension at the prospect of relatives, friends and casual acquaintances shortly descending upon us. After all, no baby can possibly enjoy being passed from lap to lap, alternately jogged boisterously by uncles and smothered with wet kisses by aunts, to the accompaniment of the utter imbecility of so-called "baby talk."—ROY PERRY, 30 Northendon Road, Sale, Manchester.

Anyone's Airfield

FIVE OF US on an outing were allowed to walk unquestioned through an airfield with hangars, planes taking off and landing, and aircraft in various stages of construction. There was not a guard in sight. A "local" of whom we made inquiries said: "You're all right. It's a right of way." Surely the present period of rearmament demands strong security methods on airfields.—MRS. I. M., Yorks.

Holiday Handicap

HAVING had thirty years' experience as a restaurant manager, I endorse the recent JOHN BULL Editorial, "A Good Idea Gone Wrong Threatens Holidays." Those who framed the Catering Act seem to have no idea of staff arrangements in hotels and restaurants. Some days a restaurant is busy in the evening; sometimes at midday. Time off for the staff has to be fixed by employer and employee, and cannot be laid down by any Act. And duties must be arranged to suit the hotel guest or restaurant customer, not the employee. In the past, staffs were underpaid and, in some cases, overworked. But this could have been rectified in other ways.—ROBERT J. PORTER, 18 Humber Terrace, Aberdour, Fife, Scotland.

What Price Privacy?

NOTICES at seaside resorts which say: *No undressing on the beach—by order* seem to me a ramp to intimidate bathers into using huts or tents—at a price. It is extortion to be asked to

pay sixpence to undress in some of the dilapidated tents I have seen recently—porous as fishnets.—M. F. B. MOORE, 369 Eastern Avenue, Ilford, Essex.

Hitchhikers Reply

AS HITCHHIKERS, we must reply to Mr. John Piper, who apparently regards us as a menace ("Free Speech," June 30). Like most people who hitchhike, we only do so when necessary, as we prefer to walk the best part of our route to see the countryside. We are always most grateful to any driver who helps us.—SHIRLEY AND REGINA MORGAN, 7 De-breos Street, Brynmill, Swansea.

. . . I, and many like me, hitchhike for the experience and interest to be gained and not entirely because it saves money.—BARRY H. PARKES, 149 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Birmingham.

From School To Army

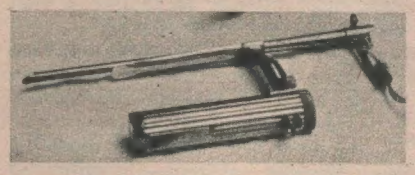
DEFERMENT OF National Service should be granted to schoolboys like myself who are approaching the call-up age. The Government should allow us a year's grace in a civilian job, so that at least we would have some experience of the "outside world" before joining the Forces. A school friend of mine left school last year and was immediately whipped into the Army. Later, he was posted to Korea, and is now lying in a Japanese hospital with a bullet in his stomach; he may be bedridden for the rest of his life. I support National Service, but do give boys a chance to become men before calling on them.—SCHOOLBOY, Glasgow.

Cat Was Trapped

LAYING OF OPEN steel traps in hedgerows and fields should be made a punishable offence. My daughter has had a favourite cat caught in a steel trap, set in the field behind our house. The cat's front paw had been caught in the trap, and she had bitten and dragged at it to release herself; she arrived home in a pitiable condition. The farmers' argument that the traps are intended to catch rabbits is no answer. If rabbits must be exterminated, they should be shot.—S. J. PHILLIPS, 101 Alrewas Road, Kings Bromley, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs.

A Life-saver

UNTIL I read Norman Phillips's enlightening JOHN BULL article "When A Child Swallows Danger," I thought that the bronchoscope had been made especially for lung patients like myself. I started treatment with the aid of this wonderful instrument twenty years ago and I feel sure that without it I should have died. Before I was introduced to the bronchoscope, I was extremely thin and round-shouldered, often had pneumonia and was never without a violent cough. Now, I am tall, upright, with a generous covering of flesh. I



am really enjoying my middle-age—thanks partly to the bronchoscope.—MRS. M. E. C., London, S.E.22.

The bronchoscope is a slender, tube-like instrument, with a small light in the base, which is passed down through the larynx and windpipe and enables the surgeon to see the interior of the larger bronchial tubes. In the photograph above, the bronchoscope is shown fitted into a laryngoscope, an allied instrument.

Little Samaritans

REACHING A "Halt At Major Road Ahead!" sign the other day, I saw a blind man hesitating at the kerb. Two little girls, not more than seven or eight years old, immediately came over and, ranging themselves on either side of the man, escorted him across the road. Then they said "Goodbye" and slipped away. I will never forget the incident.—MRS. H. POSTILL, 130 St. John's Avenue, Bridlington, Yorks.

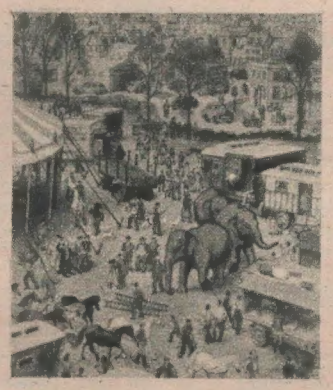
Take It Or Leave It

I QUITE agree with Mrs. A. M. Lee, who complains about the attitude of some shop assistants ("Free Speech," June 23). Even when trying to buy such a simple article as a baby's dummy, I was offered a kind I did not want and the girl assistant said irritably: "Well, will you take it or leave it?"—MRS. A. D., Staffs.

. . . I have studied salesmanship from both sides of the counter. In most cases customers are to blame. They seem to expect "service with servility" instead of "service with civility."—W. W. B., Caithness.

Letters intended for publication should be marked "Free Speech" and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped, addressed envelope for reply.

THIS WEEK'S COVER



ARTIST Ronald Lampitt says: "When I was a boy the greatest thrill of my life was the day a circus arrived—and parked at the end of my parents' garden. Over the hedge I saw the big top going up—a glorious free entertainment I will never forget."

[Every Trade Advertisement Guaranteed]

FILM always dulls your smile

Do you want it to cause decay?

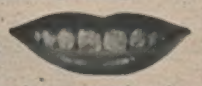
No matter whether you want whiter teeth or sounder teeth, film is a shadow on the health of your mouth. Film is the coating that forms on your teeth from saliva and food particles. Its first effect is to make your smile look dingy and unattractive.

But the second effect of film is worse—and it may cost you the health of your precious teeth. This is because some of the bacteria that swarm in every speck of film, act on food in your mouth to produce corrosive acids. Once these acids pierce the delicate enamel round your teeth, decay has a hold—and nothing *you* can do will stop it spreading. Pepsodent is the only toothpaste which contains the vital ingredient IRIUM,* that clears stubborn film from your teeth instantly and completely. If you're proud of your smile, keep your teeth healthy and free from film by brushing them with Pepsodent *after every meal*. Don't forget to see your dentist twice a year.

** Irium is the registered trade mark of Pepsodent Ltd. for a specially soluble ingredient that gives greater cleansing power and removes harmful film.*

SEE HOW QUICKLY PEPSODENT REMOVES FILM

leaving teeth white and sparkling!



BEFORE Film never lets up! A film-detecting solution† reveals that two-thirds of the surface of these teeth has been covered and discoloured by film only 12 hours after they were completely clear.

AFTER Immediately after this, the same teeth were brushed with Pepsodent Toothpaste and restored to dazzling whiteness. The film-detector was reapplied and shows how Pepsodent's Irium has removed all trace of film.

† A harmless fluid (disclosing solution), used by dentists, which stains film so that it can be seen with the naked eye.

ONLY Pepsodent TOOTHPASTE CONTAINS IRIUM **HAS THE IRIUM THAT FIGHTS FILM**

free! **TEST PEPSODENT'S POWER** to keep teeth sparkling white, and free from slimy film. Send a postcard for free sample tube, or fill in coupon on right and send it to:

Pepsodent Ltd. (Dept. B3), 59/61 Park Royal Road, London, N.W.10

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(Mr., Mrs., Miss)

ADDRESS .....

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B3

PD 165A-454

REVEAL *your natural loveliness...*

EVERY woman has a naturally beautiful skin, but its beauty may be hidden. A drab, tired-looking complexion needs Knight's Castile to float away the veil of dust and stale make-up concealing the natural loveliness beneath. Knight's Castile, modern counterpart of the first Castile soap—made for the exquisite complexions of the beauties of old Castile—is prepared from *natural* oils . . . that's why it's the kindest, mildest of soaps. Use Knight's Castile faithfully . . . your skin will be lovelier than you've ever known it.

Makes the most of your natural beauty

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At ease with 'Threes'

STATE EXPRESS

'THREE THREES'

CIGARETTES

Always first class quality

10 for 1'9

20 for 3'6

JB

...say Bulmer's for cider

Bulmer's Woodpecker is the popular drink of quality and value. Enjoy it when you are out or at home—Bulmer's Woodpecker in family flagons or "Extra Quality" in small bottles.

2½ lbs. of apples to every flagon

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JB

BOTTLED VINEGAR is best for pickling!

and this is the BEST BOTTLED VINEGAR

JB

Welcome to the Inns of Britain

beer is best

Issued by the Brewers' Society, 42 Portman Square, London, W.1

In Hongkong, three ways of life mix. The city is American in its ice-cream parlours, British in its calmness, Chinese in its swarming streets

JOHN BULL has sent Harry Hopkins on an extensive tour by air of South-East Asia. One of the most brilliant descriptive writers in British journalism today, Hopkins has been told to find out and interpret what is happening to the awakening nations of Asia, increasingly menaced by the rising tide of Communism.

This is his first article, dispatched from Hongkong, the city that must either boom or bust. Today it is booming: even the coolies can buy wrist watches. But many people have written off the wealthy British "shop" perched dangerously on the edge of Communist China; the Americans have already moved out.

Harry Hopkins

Harry Hopkins reports from the Far East

HONGKONG

THE BRONZED ELEVATOR DOORS slid silently to. From the crowded hall we shot up through the ten busy floors of the Bank of East China. On the tenth and top floor, in a small side room, an old Chinese was waiting. A faded blue Chinese gown stretched up to his neck. His white moustache grew out at the ends in two long plumes which drooped solemnly to join a wispy white beard. He bowed and placed a seat for me.

The old man was the chairman of the bank and one of the biggest Chinese business magnates of Hongkong. He was the Honourable Sir Shou Son Chow, the first Chinese to be appointed to the colony's Executive Council and, for many years, one of the famed figures of Hongkong. He was one of Queen Victoria's Chinese.

A small, limp, paper book rested at his elbow. Its leaves were of pinkish colour, slightly water-stained, full of Chinese characters. It was, Sir Shou Son Chow explained, his ancestor record. "I am ninety-one years old by the Chinese calendar," the old man said, speaking clearly and firmly, "and ninety years old by the British calendar. I have nine generations behind me and five generations in front of me—and all have lived in Hongkong."

Sir Shou Son claims that his grandfather was one of the village elders who, in 1841, helped Captain Elliott, the British representative, to nail up the first proclamation on the barren, rocky island that became Hongkong. Shou Son himself went back to China for his schooling and served, as a mandarin of various ranks, under three Manchu emperors. Then, as China's dormant volcano erupted again in Sun Yat Sen's Nationalist revolution, Shou Son Chow, like countless of his fellow countrymen before and since, returned to Hongkong to seek the peace and freedom that had passed his homeland by. "I saw the Boxer Rising," said the old man. He

took a sip from the amber glass of tea in front of him. "I have seen six wars. We suffered in all of them. I do not want to see another."

I went down in the lift and along the street to another of Hongkong's innumerable banks, and in the vast marble American-style banking hall I drew some money against a letter of credit. In almost any other Eastern country this would have been a highly frustrating experience, involving the writing of chits, the dispatching of messengers who never returned, the transportation to and fro of immense ledgers.

Not so in Hongkong. Here, Chinese eyes smiled instant comprehension. Hongkong dollars? Yes, sir. Click . . . click . . . click went the abacus. A youth who looked about fifteen annotated the letter of credit, handed over a bundle of notes. On a table near the abacus—rows of fat black beads on a long frame, a device thousands of years old—stood the latest American calculating machine. But the cashier stuck to his abacus. He showed it off to me—though I never found anybody who could really explain it to me. It must remain a part of the mystery of China—and the complexity of Hongkong, which contains within itself a unique and stimulating amalgam of three ways of life: the American, the British and the Chinese.

Ancient And Modern

It is American in its air-conditioned buildings, its express elevators, its ice-cream parlours, its multi-page menus and its shiny, jostling taxis. It is British in its neat red buses, its calm, its respectability, and the innumerable flowering shrubs that we have planted over the barren Peak, accompanied by the occasional "Do Not Damage" notice.

It is Chinese in its swarming streets, its lithe youths in white singlets and shorts, squatting on their haunches on the pavements, its old "coolie" women in black smocks and trousers, with wise, wrinkled, smiling faces. And, though they may embrace the West, the Chinese of Hongkong are yet wise enough not to reject the good things of their own people: things like the abacus, the delicate flavours of their food, their junks, their tea, and the long, high-necked "Shanghai gown," an infinitely feminine blend of revelation and concealment.

"Hongkong," says the Government's public relations officer, "is a shop." And what a shop! It must be just about the biggest, best and cheapest in the world. Two million people come to a small island to buy and sell and get rich. The world's goods spill over under bright, hard lights. Swiss watches. Japanese "Leicas" for less than £10. Chinese silks. Australian eggs. Glazed ducks and fowls from China, their heads twisted into attitudes of petrified protest. English shirts. And U.S. dollars, freely on sale, drawn out of the hidden hoards of China by the irresistible magnet of Hongkong.

Junk Boat Stevedores

Down on the quayside, the junks are loading. The boxes are five feet high, bulky, square. "*White Shirting, 36 × 42 yds.,*" says the stencilled print. "*Made in Japan. For Kuweit via Bahrein.*" An old woman in black and a boy of thirteen or so throw a rope around a box and manhandle it to the point on the edge of the quay where a plank slopes down into their junk. They push the box over. Another youth, perched on the plank, walks backwards down it, holding back the box as the old woman and the boy take the strain on the rope. Somehow, nobody is either killed or drowned.

On all the goods that pass through its hands—and most do—Hongkong takes its cut: storage, insurance, breaking-down, making-up, shipping. When, recently, India barred shipments of gunny bags as a measure of retaliation against South Africa, they were shipped instead to Hongkong—and then on to South Africa. When India appealed to Britain to have this evasion stopped, the gunny bags were sent from Hongkong to Indonesia. But somehow they still arrived in South Africa. That sort of skill is one of the reasons why Hongkong, today doing Shanghai's old trade as well as its own, has just enjoyed five of the most booming years in its booming history.

Symbol of Hongkong today: left, the Communist Bank of China; right, the influential Hongkong and Shanghai Bank

Hongkong's big problem is its 330,000 squatters. Shanty towns like the one

To most people outside Hongkong, no prosperity ever seemed more precarious. Many, in fact, have already written off Hongkong. The Chase National Bank and the American Express banking department have closed their doors and gone home. The American Consul has evacuated American women and children.

Hongkong is righteously indignant. For in Hongkong optimism is a religion—it has to be. "I am full of confidence in the future," says P. S. Cassidy, an old Hongkong hand who represent's the Chamber of Commerce on the colony's Legislative Council. "Times are abnormal, yes. But in Hongkong the abnormal *is* normal. In the whole of my thirty-eight years out here I've never known a normal year. When I came out, and they were saying how strange the Chinese looked without their queues, they said to me: 'Just wait till China settles down again, my boy. Then it'll be all right.' Well, China never has settled down—but Hongkong has not done so badly. This is about the only place in the world where people still aren't politically conscious—and we're all very happy. The only thing that makes us a bit worried at times is the ignorance about Hongkong at home which might lead to its being given away as a counter at the conference table."

If Hongkong *did* start to worry today, it would probably worry to death. For few communities can ever have lived under the overhang of so much potential disaster.

There have even been rehearsals. The first occurred in June, 1925, when, at the bidding of Borodin and his old Moscow hands in Canton, the Kuomintang-run "Waterfront Workers' Union" declared a General Strike in Hongkong. "Absolutely everybody left you—your servants, the public utility workers, the scavengers. Even the ferries stopped. But after a bit people set about keeping the place going. High government officials stoked boilers after they left their offices. Others drove night-soil lorries. It went on for three months and was accompanied by a boycott of British goods. You couldn't negotiate, because their only stated demand was the return of Hongkong to China. In the end, the funds were exhausted and the strike failed."

Free Rides On The Trams

The second rehearsal took place eighteen months ago. When the tramway company turned down a demand for a large pay increase and offered only arbitration, its conductors stopped collecting fares. They put red badges in their buttonholes and danced the "Yen-ko"—the village folk dance that the Communists have made their own. For three days, Hongkong rode free. Then, after Christmas was over, the tramway company withdrew the trams. The strike lasted forty-four days. Then it, too, collapsed. "We definitely know," says a high police official, "that Canton was in on it. It was a trial of strength, but it failed completely." The Communist leader of the strike, a Cantonese, was pushed quietly over the frontier.

Since then, all wage claims have gone to arbitration, and last year less than 5,000 man-days were lost in strikes. But, despite the efforts of a British trade union adviser to build up genuine unionism, the Hongkong trade unions remain riven by the feuds of China's politics. The local Trade Union Congress backs Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang. The Federation of Trade Unions stands for the Communist boss, Mao Tse-tung. It controls the public utility unions that could paralyse the city, but for the present orders are to watch and wait.

"Meanwhile," says the police official, "it has been much easier since the Communists turned nasty. To many Chinese here now it is clear that this is the end of the road. They will fight to the death in defence of Hongkong." Like the people of Berlin, the people of Hongkong are

above, photographed by Harry Hopkins, ring the city—a breeding ground for disease and fire

today seeing Communism at close quarters—and they are not encouraged by what they see.

Unfortunately, inside Hongkong there is another kind of Trojan horse—the gun and knife on hire to the highest bidder. Though to the superficial eye it is more quiet and orderly at night than London, this great agglomeration of humanity hides deep undercurrents of violence. The roots of law and order are shallow.

In 1941 the Japanese, before they struck against the colony, hired mobsters of the Triad secret societies to assassinate the principal Europeans. Just in time, the police got to hear of the plot. The mobsters were kept off by an Oriental mixture of bribes and threats. Today the Triad societies are illegal—though they continue to exist. Fortunately, the Communists regard them as a challenge to their own authority. The carrying of firearms has been made a capital offence and fast grey police-carriers, radio-equipped and with a dozen policemen sitting sideways, back to back, ready for instant action, circulate about the colony, conducting surprise random searches. Streets are swiftly surrounded and systematically combed, people asked where they are going and why.

Hunt For Assassins

Recently, after the assassination of two Chinese police constables on duty, a vast area of the New Territories was combed in a large-scale operation in co-operation with British troops. Thousands of people were searched and questioned, nearly a hundred taken away for further investigation, half a dozen or so charged. A system of identity cards has been introduced. Two million people have been registered.

But Hongkong is floundering under the weight of twice its normal prewar population—twice the population with which its services are geared to cope. And every day, whether legally or illegally, more settlers arrive. Superintendent N. B. Fraser, of the Hongkong Police—a Highlander from Elgin—who is in charge at the closely guarded frontier of Hongkong and China, told me that every week 2,000 people still try to get through the border illegally, although only one per cent succeed.

While prosperity continues, all may be well. Wages have risen faster than prices. The ordinary worker is much better off than ever before. Even coolies now can have leather shoes and wrist-watches. Yet the boom is collapsing. The great "hongs"—the influential business houses—can live on their ample fat, but already the small man is worried and scared. For in Hongkong enormous numbers of people eke out a living with small deals and commissions, living on the crumbs that fall from the Hongkong table; and today the crumbs are getting scarce.

No Dole To Fall Back On

Since the war, Hongkong's industries have been greatly increased. Chinese from Shanghai came here in 1947 and set up large spinning mills more modern than any in Lancashire. Now, with America's arbitrary and sweeping embargoes, stocks are disappearing. Something like three-quarters of a million men, women and children depend on these Hongkong industries—big factories or one-room affairs. They have become accustomed to a regular wage and all that it means. And there is no unemployment pay.

For such a situation, Hongkong has always had a remedy. It was simple—beautifully simple—and it worked. "China," the old hands tell you, "is both a reservoir and a sponge. When things are good here, people flow into Hongkong from China; when it gets tough here, China re-absorbs them." But now there is a high wire fence across the frontier. The sponge has ceased to work.

Shanty towns ring the city, clinging crazily to the hillsides like swifts' nests, a maze of catwalks and ladders, hut piled on hut, reaching halfway up a mountainside. They have their shops, their "factories," their landlords, their building contractors and, inevitably, their racketeers—like the "fire protection organizers," who levy a toll on every hut and then are the first to decamp when the fire breaks out. But, whether they are built of petrol cans or old packing cases, these squatter homes—unlike the hovels of India's refugees—are built with a certain pride and craft and kept as clean as may be. It is hard not to feel admiration for the hardihood, the fantastic industry, the indomitable spirit of these people.

Up Sticks—And Down Again

The admiration of the Hongkong Government, however, is not entirely unalloyed. The squatter colonies—built often under the very eaves of fine new houses—are a terrible fire hazard, it says. In fact, they burn down regularly. The squatter colonies are a menace to public health. In the squatter huts, crimes and outrages can be plotted safe from the ears of the ever-present informer. So, after due notice, the squatter homes are knocked down. The squatters, accepting their fate with Oriental resignation and docility, pick up the remains and go off to start life again a little farther down the road.

The colony remains ringed by 330,000 squatters—fifteen per cent of its total population. Yet their huts are healthier than the homes of most of the ordinary people of Hongkong, whose old narrow tenement houses are honeycombed with cubicles where people sleep in corridors, live on balconies, and it is standard for half a dozen families to share one tiny kitchen and bathroom space. "Nine persons die every day from T.B.," chants the Hongkong radio. "Do not spit and spread infection!"

Hardly daring to admit to itself that the classic "reservoir and sponge" approach will work no longer, the Government seems numbed and appalled by the size of its problem. A handful of screened squatters, having proved long residence in Hongkong, have been allocated to "approved" sites where "standard huts" may be erected for the 800 dollars which they have not got and cannot now borrow. Though the city sparkles with fine new apartment blocks

Jewellery, silk, eggs . . . Hongkong is the biggest, cheapest shop in the world. And on all goods that pass through it, the city takes its cut

Superintendent N. B. Fraser shows the control points at the border. Each week 2,000 people illegally try to get through into Hongkong

built by the Government, by the bank, by the great "hongs" to house their own staffs, small-scale pilot schemes of cheap housing for ordinary people are only now being considered.

No place is more fertile in excuses—and most of them are excellent ones. After the Japanese occupation, there was a tremendous rehabilitation problem. Most of the European-style houses were in ruins. The coolies who had lived there had chopped up the mantelpieces for firewood, then the doors, and finally the roof joists, till the houses collapsed about them. At the outset, the colony had no funds, was running on borrowed money. And even now, despite unexampled prosperity, revenue is inadequate for any real welfare programme.

"Income tax only 12½ per cent, starting for man and wife at £800 a year . . .?"

"Yes, but you know you must be careful here

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A Bridge Between

by ***RICHARD BUSH***

ILLUSTRATED BY MAUDSON

Richard was her husband—but Bill was the man she admired. And with Bill she could have a new life

NO SOONER WAS SUSAN AWAKE than she knew what had wakened her. It had happened so often before. She switched on the bedside light. "Is it the pain again?" she asked.

Richard was standing by the bed pouring water from the Thermos into a glass. The bottle of stomach powder was already open. In the yellow light he looked very pale.

"A little. Must have eaten something. Nothing to worry about."

She lay with the sheet thrown back, watching him. Her back against the bed was clammy and hot. The pillow under her bare neck was damp.

"It's the same old story," she said. "I can always tell. Reynolds has been beastly again, hasn't he?"

"N—no. It's nothing. Something I've eaten, that's all." He crawled back into bed and switched off the light.

She lay spreadeagled, her arms and legs extended, trying to get cool. The ceiling fan above the beds, squeaking at each revolution, merely stirred the hot air. It was absurd that here in an oilfield there was no oil for the fan. It was Richard's fault. All he thought of was his work. For months past it had been the bridge. Now that the bridge was finished and they were back here at headquarters in Testakadi it was as bad, if not worse. Work, work, nothing but work. It was Reynolds's fault, too. He was a slavedriver, a tyrant. Nobody, except perhaps Bill, would stand up to him. Richard hadn't enough backbone. He was too conscientious, too soft. Bill stood no nonsense from anyone. . . .

She heard the bed creak as Richard got up again and went to the bathroom. He did not switch on the bathroom light. He was there a long time.

"What's the matter now?" she called. He did not answer. She put on the light and went across the timber floor.

He was sitting on the edge of the bath, his fists pressed into his eyes, his long, fair hair falling over his forehead. There was something boyish about the posture. It carried her back twenty years to Crawfoot, to when they were children.

"Is it very bad?" she said.

He dropped his hands in a hopeless sort of way. "My tummy's not so bad now," he said. "I just can't sleep. It's the bridge."

"The bridge? I thought you'd finished worrying——"

"It's collapsed. The river flooded unexpectedly."

She went to him and took his hand. "Come to bed. You can't help a flood. You won't do yourself any good, worrying."

He stood up, his hand still in hers. "You don't understand. It wasn't an abnormal flood. The bridge should have stood up to it. And much more." He felt in the pocket of his pyjama jacket and handed her a crumpled piece of paper. It was the typed copy of a cablegram.

"Come to bed first," she said. She led him by the hand like a small boy back to the bed. She went down the hallway to the fridge and brought a glass of milk and some biscuits. Gratefully, like a patient animal, he sipped the milk.

She straightened the crumpled paper and read the typed copy.

TO MANAGING DIRECTOR,
TESTAKADI OIL AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION,
LONDON.

REGRET INFORM YOU THAT ON NIGHT OF EIGHTH MAY RIVER TESTAK IN SPATE CAUSED CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE RIGHT BANK ABUTMENT AND CENTRE PIER OF NEW BRIDGE COMMISSIONED LAST JANUARY STOP FULL INVESTIGATION PROCEEDING UNDER CHIEF ENGINEER REYNOLDS STOP PLEASE REQUEST CONSULTANTS SEND REPRESENTATIVE EARLIEST STOP REGRET OPERATIONS AT PENDANG SUSPENDED LETTER FOLLOWS ENDS

(SIGNED) W. RAMSON
OVERSEAS MANAGER

She dropped the paper on the bed. She could feel him looking at her.

"*You* don't need to worry," she said at last. "You didn't design it. You were only in charge of construction, weren't you? I don't see that they can blame you for anything."

He put the glass down on the table. "You don't understand. They'll probe into everything."

She turned in bed and reached out and took his hand. Searching his face and eyes, she said: "You're not really afraid, are you? I mean, you haven't got a guilty conscience, or anything like that? You *know* you didn't do anything wrong, don't you?"

He replied testily: "Of course. Of course. But you never know. . . ." He picked up the glass and took another sip. She knew he wasn't speaking the truth. There *was* something.

"Are you sure?"

He did not look at her. Her brain seemed to be stuck in a groove, like a faulty gramophone disc. She saw the same scene over and over. Richard sitting in the bucket on the cableway. Richard, the non-swimmer, going over the swirling water to inspect the centre pier and the far abutment. She could imagine the sick emptiness in his stomach as the bucket swayed and jerked to the pull of the winch. She remembered when he had put off inspection with one excuse or another. She thought of the times she had heard him call out to Robinson, the assistant engineer, in the next tent: "Shan't be able to go over today, Robbie. Go and see how they're getting on, will you?"

She folded the paper and put it under the pillow. She said: "You needn't worry, then. Come, let's get some sleep." She leaned over and put out the light. She heard him slide down between the sheets.

BILL DRAPER rode on in front. She watched him ahead of her, riding the roan easily and gracefully along the path under the coconut palms towards the sea.

When they reached the beach, they turned right towards the Point and set the horses to a gallop. The wind screamed in her ears as she raced him, neck and neck. They reined in after they had passed the old dressing hut.

"Beaten you again!" he shouted against the wind. His face was flushed and excited beneath the tan.

They stumbled through the sand to the hut. Away beyond the Point they could see the top of one of the derricks above the trees. He took her bridle and tethered the horses in the shade. He came back swinging the towels and swimsuits in his hand. He threw hers to her.

"Let's see who's ready first," he laughed, and disappeared among the palms to change.

He was ready first. He stood leaning against a tree, smoking a cigarette. She could see him through the chinks in the bamboo of the hut. She was nearly ready when she saw him throw his cigarette away and come towards the door.

Bill looked at her. "Well, Sue?" he said.

HE stood there, looking at her. "Come on, slow coach," he said and came in and took her hand. She was ready but for her cap. Near the door, he turned suddenly and took her in his arms. She waited a second or two, before pushing him away.

"Don't, Bill. Not now." She ran across the hot sand to the sea. He pounded beside her and they plunged in together.

Afterwards, lying in the sun, Bill turned his head to her. "Well, Sue?"

She did not answer at once. She scooped up a handful of sand and let it trickle through her fingers. Far out in the bay a ship was ploughing through the swell, probably homeward bound.... She found it hard to analyse her feelings.

He rolled over and half sat up, supporting himself on one elbow. His face was very close. "You know damn well you don't give a tinker's cuss what Ramson and Reynolds and the rest of the poisonous crew here think. I can pick up

Uncertain of her true feelings, Susan didn't answer him at once. But Bill was impatient. "Come on," he said, "you know you want to leave him"

a job at home any time. Come on. You know you want to leave him."

His arm was about her now. She wriggled free. "Please, Bill. I promised I'd let you know by Monday. A promise is a promise. *Please* leave me till then to work it out."

She reached out her hand for a cigarette. After she'd lit it, she said: "You've heard about the bridge, I suppose? Richard's very worried. He thinks he may be held responsible."

"Oh?"

He wasn't really interested, she knew. She envied him his mental calm, the poise of his life. Bill had been engaged on the bridge, too. His laboratory work was important, and he did it well. She could not imagine him doing anything inefficiently. His days were not fretted by harrowing, useless worry. But something made her want to tell him.

"Richard is terribly upset," she said. "There's going to be an inquiry. He thinks someone will catch it."

He sat up and reached for a cigarette. "I dare say he does." He seemed amused. "I can't remember a time when Richard didn't think someone was going to catch it. Usually he thought it was him. Richard," he said, carefully lighting the cigarette, "is a bit of a rabbit, I'm afraid. He takes things too seriously. For instance, take the bridge."

He turned round suddenly, interest and amusement in his eye, but looking at her, his eyes changed. "No, don't let's take the damned bridge. Let's take us."

She gazed at him for a while, suddenly loving him. Then, lightly brushing his cheek with her hand, she stood up. She collected the towels and odds and ends, and together they walked back to the huts. The sun beat down on their backs.

They rode back along the track to Testakadi. When they parted, he held her hand for a moment.

"I find it very hard to wait, Sue," he said.

THE Investigating Committee worked fast. The man from head office arrived within the week, by plane. Richard spent all his evenings with files and records. He was seized with sudden paroxysms of nervousness and would walk about the room, biting his nails. She asked him one day how it was going. He looked up from his writing.

"This questionnaire," he said. "They're so devilishly thorough. Reynolds has thought of everything." He continued scribbling. His face glistened in the hot light.

It was worse when he had to appear in person before the Committee. He came back from the sessions pale and tired.

"What sort of things do they want to know?" she asked one day. He was sitting on the veranda in his favourite wicker chair, sipping the milk she had brought. There were shadows under his eyes. It was very hot and humid.

"Everything under the sun. Reynolds sits there at the head of the table like Jove on Olympus, with a thunderbolt in one hand and a sceptre in the other, gloating on the forthcoming sacrifice. Oh, how I hate that man!"

She saw his hand tighten on the glass. The shrill ring of the telephone stopped any further discussion. It was Bill.

"I've just heard that the boat is nearly full," he said. "We'll have to risk it. I'm going down now to book for both of us."

"No," she said breathlessly. "No. You mustn't. "I—I'll ring you first thing in the morning. I promise." She rang off.

That night Susan woke again with a start. Some sound had wakened her. It was not Richard walking about. She could see him in the soft light from the window, still in bed. She lay still and listened. Nothing. About to doze off, she heard it again. This time there was no mistake. Richard had groaned. A horrible, sobbing groan.

Instantly she was fully awake. She switched on the light. He was on his back, his eyes closed. His hands, on top of the sheet, twitched restlessly.

She jumped out and sat on the edge of his bed. "What is it, Dick?"

He opened his eyes. They lit up when he saw her. "Susan!" He clutched her hand.

She gently released his hand and ran across the creaking boards to the telephone.

DOCTOR SOAMES arrived in an ambulance ten minutes later. "If it's what I think it is, the quicker the better!" he said. She hurried with him to the bedroom.

He did not say anything more till they were alone again in the sitting-room.

"It's as I thought, Susan. I'm afraid I'll have to take him away with me to the hospital right now. We'll have to operate immediately." He patted her on the cheek. "Keep your pecker up!" He handed her a small tube of pills. "Take a couple of these if you can't sleep. I'll ring you as soon as there is anything to report," he said, and went to the ambulance.

The pills did not do much good. She was

Continued on page 25

Sheila and Eric, stars of the ballroom

They began like any other youngsters gliding round the Palais floor. Now artistry, hard work—and luck—have made them dancing champions of the world *by ELKAN ALLAN*

Instructor Frank Alback checks Eric's worst fault: the left arm that wanders out of line

Sheila calls at Eric's home to put a shine on the trophies that cost them £500 a year

FOUR OR FIVE TIMES a week, a wavy-haired, tilt-nosed youth named Eric Lashbrooke and his dark, pretty friend, Sheila Wilkinson, pay their money at the box office of a dance hall, change into their dancing-shoes, and get down to work.

While others on the crowded floor move more or less haphazardly to the rhythm of the band, Eric and Sheila solemnly concentrate on the intricate steps they are performing. As they glide by, crossing and recrossing their feet in complex patterns, other couples watch them enviously. Dazzled newcomers are told, with awe, "They're the world champion amateur dancers."

Both only eighteen, Eric, a barman, and Sheila, a shorthand-typist, flew to Switzerland last year to win this crown for Britain. Chosen by a committee of British representatives, they were not told beforehand that it was more than an ordinary expenses-paid competition. "When we got to Lausanne and found it was the world championship, you could have knocked us down with a dancing pump," says Eric. Continental competitions are twice as gruelling as those in England. Here competitors dance only four dances: waltz, foxtrot, tango and quickstep. But abroad rhumba, samba, paso doble and Viennese waltz are added.

Strangely enough, the great experts in the Viennese waltz are not the Viennese but the Danes. For Eric and Sheila this was the crucial battle: level on other dances, they had stiff opposition from the Danish challengers in the waltz, but with an extra flourish and twirl they managed to come out on top.

Waltz That Started It All

Mastery of the art of ballroom dancing came suddenly to Eric five years ago, when he was very much still a schoolboy. He had stumbled awkwardly round at parties, and one evening he went to a small dance hall. It was during a waltz that he suddenly found he had the knack of it and that other couples were stopping dancing just to watch him and his partner. He started practising seriously, taking three lessons a week—but he was still far from perfect and, on average, laddered one of his partner's stockings every session.

His teacher, professional champion Billy Hooker, had a system of fining his pupils for persistent mistakes. Eric's greatest lapse from perfection is bending his left arm too far forward—it should be completely level with his body. "That left arm of mine cost me five shillings a week while I was under Hooker," Eric recalls ruefully. The money went to a charity. Despite the handicap, however, he picked up thirty-eight cups and medals as a junior champion. When he was sixteen he graduated into the senior competitions.

That wayward left arm cost Eric and Sheila this year's *Star* amateur ballroom title and the £50 in trophies and vouchers that go with it. Because he was still unable to prevent himself from crooking it slightly, he and Sheila were placed only third. But a month later, in Blackpool, they beat the *Star* winners to gain second place in the British Amateur Championship.

A big dancing contest is unlike any other sporting event. It attracts crowds large enough to fill the Empress Hall, Earl's Court, and they shout and applaud like the ice-hockey fans who usually sit in the seats there. But the objects of their enthusiasm—the dancers—are cool and collected in full evening dress, skimming round the floor laid on top of the ice with the elegance of animated tailors' dummies.

If an ordinary untrained dancer tried to do the steps which they dance with such ease, he would almost certainly fall over, because the serious expert trips a light fantastic which is really fantastic. There are eliminating heats, and the quickstep is the highspot, always left to the end and danced with a variety of criss-cross shuffles that bring the crowd shouting to its feet. Showing off new steps is one of Eric's strong points, and he continuously draws spontaneous applause with his "runs and locks."

Most Girls Soon Gave Up

Sheila follows him with telepathic obedience. Once, at a contest in Earl's Court, however, he found her clinging to him with more than ordinary ardour, and not paying as much attention to his feet as she ought. He glanced down at her and discovered that the bodice of her strapless evening gown was falling down. Sizing up the situation, he adopted a much closer style of dancing than usual and managed to appear unconcerned while she slipped it back into place. Despite this accident, they still managed to get into the next round.

They met at Hammersmith Palais de Danse after Eric had lost his "junior" partner because she was still under sixteen. Momentarily without a competition partner, he was looking for a girl about three inches shorter than his own five feet seven inches, good-natured, good-looking, a natural dancer and sufficiently keen about it to submit herself to the rigours of competitive life. He had tried out three other girls before Sheila, but all of them had packed it up after a month, saying that the continual practising was too much like hard work. Eric and Sheila were introduced by a friend, who tactfully left them alone, but Eric merely said "Good evening," and walked off. "I thought him very rude," says Sheila.

One Sunday afternoon a few weeks later the two met again, and this time Eric asked Sheila to dance. They got on well together and, after a few more dances, he told her casually that he had booked a double lesson for them the following evening. He sprang another surprise a few weeks later. Just before the quickstep competition, Eric told her, "I've put our names down for this." They were given the number "7" to wear on Eric's back, and they won. Sheila's prize was a string of pearls, which she still wears at all competitions.

Superstitious, they claim they always win if their number has a seven in it. But in the 1951 British Amateur Championship their number was seventy-seven and they were top only in the tango and quickstep. "We should have had four sevens to make sure," says Eric.

Always Carries Lucky Charms

On competition nights he carries an assortment of lucky charms in his pockets, including a miniature mummy, a white horse, a gold fob, and a cigarette paper given to him as he went on to the floor in one contest. On it is written: "I enjoy your dancing very much and wish you all the luck in your future successes.—A deaf-and-dumb well-wisher."

Both Eric and Sheila admit that if they did not have indulgent parents—and employers—they would not be able to be championship dancers. Apart from the time and the travelling it takes, there are lessons, hotels, fares and

The dancing that brings the crowd to its feet: Sheila and Eric in a championship contest

entrance fees to pay. Their clothes are expensive. Male dancers have special tails made with a short jacket in "bellboy" style, short-waisted to give the effect of long leg line, thus making them look as tall as possible.

Eric has two such dress suits, which cost him £35 each, plus two dinner jackets, one of them white for Latin-American dances. His shoes are specially made to throw his weight slightly over, because his natural tread is outward and most movements must be danced on the inside of the foot.

Sheila has a rule never to wear an evening dress three times running without altering it or buying a new one. "I get tired of them and I expect the judges would, too." She has them specially made for her, and they cost £40 each. Ready-made evening dresses are not full enough for dancing. "A competition dancer's dress," says Sheila, "must create a gentle line, without tightness in the waist. The curve from shoulder to foot must make a 'picture.'" She wears out a pair of 25s. shoes each month on the dance floor, and she buys new head-dresses and long gloves for each new dress.

Lessons cost each of the couple 15s. an hour. They go several times a month to Richmond, where bristle-moustached Frank Alback teaches. Because his rôle as leader of the team of two is the more difficult, Eric goes more often, and dances with an invisible partner, to a gramophone. Alback barks at him: "Stop! See how both your legs are bent at the same time—very ungraceful, very disgraceful." He is more critical of Eric than other pupils because he knows the youth can take it in.

"Only once in twenty years does such a dancer come along," says Alback. "It's almost unknown for a youngster to go straight from the junior class to the top of the amateur tree. He has learnt in two years as much as most dancers learn in eight. I do a step and, however intricate it is, he can copy it right away."

Even in the middle of competitions, Alback sometimes shoots an urgent whisper at Eric, like a trainer to a boxer in the ring. "Use the centre of the floor more, watch that left arm." But at other contests he must keep silent, for, as well as being a teacher, he is a judge. "It's very difficult to mark my own pupils fairly and, in an effort to be honest, I may tend to penalize Eric. In last year's British Amateur Competition, I marked him low. Other judges put him top, and when the marks were totalled up he was third."

No Bouquet For Average Dancer

Alback is saddened by the standard of dancing in most dance halls. "About 300,000 people go dancing in London alone every week, but I don't suppose 1,000 of them have been properly trained. Why, the standard is so low that colleagues of mine were stopped by the management of one hall from dancing beautiful long weaving runs and locks in a quickstep and told, 'Please dance properly.' I suppose they were expected to do the awful close-embracing American 'bunny-hug' style that's really suitable only for crowded night-club floors. That is not proper dancing. Mind you, I agree that when steps cannot be done without special practice with a special partner they can no longer be classed as ballroom dancing—they go into the exhibition class. But that's no excuse for the sloppy dancing you see everywhere."

Modern ballroom dancing became established twenty-one years ago, when the Official Board of Ballroom Dancing was set up. Before that, every teacher had his or her own ideas as to what constituted a foxtrot or a waltz. Now a qualified teacher in Aberdeen teaches the same steps as one in Plymouth. Alback claims that a complete novice can be taught to dance well enough in three months to win the Bronze Medal of competence. His advice to beginners is: "Take long, confident steps and keep your weight forward."

To Eric and Sheila, the immediate returns for their expenditure of something like £500 a year are small: last year they won about £125 in prizes. Although cash is barred for amateurs, they are given vouchers to spend at stores. This year they expect to win more. But they will not see anything like their money back unless they turn professional.

This they will most likely do when they have won both the *Star* and the British Amateur titles. Like most winners before them, they would open their own studio to teach dancing, give demonstrations and enter for the bigger professional prizes. But even professionals need coaching, and it costs them a guinea an hour.

The "Monotony" Of Jiving

About anything other than straight ballroom dancing, Eric is patronizing. Jiving he calls "monotonous or acrobatic, or both." Old-time dancing, which is beginning to invade the competition field, he describes rather sceptically as "very pretty." And he is not very interested in "the ballet of the ballroom," formation dancing, in which six or eight couples dance the same steps at the same time.

Some of the older members of the dancing community deplore the effect of mass audiences on competition dancing. It means that dancing becomes a slick show to get applause, they say. Eric recognizes the innuendo on his somewhat flambuoyant, audience-pleasing style, but is not dismayed. "We're dancers of the present day," say Eric and Sheila. "That means skilful advance on the basic ballroom steps."

One lesson Eric learnt early was never to wear new shoes if you want to show off. He did this when he entered for his very first award, the Bronze Medal—and slipped and skidded four times. He was so good when he was standing up, however, that he won his medal. THE END

Holding the girl in her arms, Sister Marie waited amid the smoke and flames. Then, as the arc lamp came on, she stepped out on to the parapet

SISTER MARIE

by ***MICHAEL JOHNS***

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURENT

She was a nun and I was in show business. It was strange that I became the one to share her secret

THERE WAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT about her, I noticed on my very first day at the sanatorium. If you compared the other nursing nuns to serene but rather distant stars, secure in heaven, Sister Marie's light had the more poignant uncertainty of earthly candles. The convent minted a single expression on its faces: a kind of chiseled repose. Sister Marie's was the exception.

Kept idle in the institution stuck on the side of a Swiss mountain, a thousand miles from home, I had to take my entertainment where I could find it. In Sister Marie, I found a subject for endless speculation. What was her story? A simple one of *chagrin d'amour*? Or had she committed some crime that still weighed on her conscience? Was it a family tragedy? Or had she reached the convent in the normal course of events? I could not even tell whether she was a blonde or a brunette. Her waxen skin gave little clue. From her voice, light yet slightly husky, I judged she was a blonde. But the colour of her hair was not the only secret she hid beneath the stiff white wimple.

Watching her balancing my breakfast tray, or catching a brief close-up as she arranged my pillows, I was never tired of tracing the shadow of experience which showed itself through even her smallest movements. And as I tried to make the impersonal white-panelled room a little more like home, I began to notice that my interest in Sister Marie was reciprocated. I was doubly intrigued; first by the hint of mortal conflict in her face, and secondly by the possibility of using it to stage a little private *divertissement* between herself and me.

The motives which made us partners in this subtle but by no means imaginary situation would be as hard to pinpoint as the features in my room, which combined to give my friends the impression of a circus caravan. It is simply that I happen to be in show business.

Anyway, Sister Marie became my most frequent visitor. When I needed anything, from wire for a radio aerial to pins to fix my pictures, it was Sister Marie who produced it. If something went wrong—as it sometimes does in an institution where the staff is instinctively more intent on serving God than man—I found Sister Marie bending her heart-shaped face to my complaints. If my temperature went up, it was Sister Marie's restless, midnight eyes that assessed the story of the fever chart and measured out the antidote.

She always came with the same slightly anguished smile, the same quick glances round my room, followed by a moment's hesitation when she stood like a baroque angel in a niche, framed in the space between the double doors.

It did not occur to me that show business could have anything to do with it, until one morning when she was bringing round the eleven o'clock milk, I happened to be fiddling with the radio. Suddenly it blared out the strident brass-band overture to some popular variety show. She jerked up in her tracks and nearly dropped the tray. Her expression was so intense that it could not have been mere disapproval at the loudspeaker's brazen interruption of the morning "cure."

I held the volume knob, watching her with a sudden sense of power, as though she were controlled by the knob beneath my fingers. I even tried to hear what she was hearing; strained to catch the overtone, the mysterious

Continued on page 24

The glider champion's wife gives chase

by IAN BEVAN

Her rôle has helped to make Philip Wills the greatest human bird in Britain—the flyer who found the way to fame on a trail of hot air

Wills and his wife plan a long-distance flight. Some of his secrets were learned from vultures

Family and friends help Wills assemble his glider. In the background is the transport trailer

FORTY-THREE YEAR OLD PHILIP WILLS has been described—by no less a person than Lord Brabazon of Tara—as "the greatest human bird Britain has ever produced." The description fits him well, for he is a tall, thin, angular man with hawklike features, who gives the impression as he walks that he might, at any moment, flap his arms and rise into the air; but Lord Brabazon was commenting less on his physical appearance than on his ability as gliding champion of Britain, a member of the country's gliding team and chairman of the British Gliding Association.

Next week he will be competing in the annual national championships at Great Hucklow, Derbyshire, against a field which will include teenage A.T.C. cadets, a jet-plane test pilot, a stockbroker, several naval officers, some university students, an advertising agent and a civil servant. Wills is a London export merchant who spends his weekdays at an office desk in the City, worrying about bills of exchange and shipping allocations. He likes to stress the wide range of occupations among glider pilots, for he is an enthusiastic missionary who says that this sport can be enjoyed by men and women in any walk of life, from their early teens up to their late fifties.

A Plane In His Luggage

His own conversion from power flying (he was an entrant in the 1930 King's Cup) to gliding was made by a fellow Harrovian at the age of twenty-five. Since then it has been an absorbing interest to himself, his wife, his four children, and almost everyone with whom he has come in contact. When he went to South Africa on a commercial trip, a glider—or, more correctly, a sailplane—was part of his luggage, and between business conferences he introduced high-performance soaring to the South African Gliding Club.

When he started, in the early thirties, gliding in Britain was more or less restricted to a group of adventurous youngsters who regarded it as a personal battle between themselves and the force of gravity. Merely to keep a motorless plane in the air was considered a noteworthy feat in itself. This was far from being the case in Germany, where peace-treaty restrictions on the development of power flying had concentrated effort on gliding as a means of gaining knowledge and training pilots for a future German air force.

Wills attended the first international contests held in Germany in 1937, and soon realized the difference between the well-financed, carefully planned activity in that country, and the amateur, weekend sport as it existed in his own. "It was almost entirely a Service show," he recalls, "yet we didn't acknowledge gliding in any of the British Services." Things are different today, with flourishing clubs in all three Services, and an active training programme in the Air Training Corps, which last year qualified 1,474 boys for the "A" certificate—the basic qualification for glider pilots.

Gliding technique has now developed to a point where races are sometimes held over triangular courses which involve staying in the air for several hours and averaging more than forty miles an hour—a far cry from the day, only forty years ago, when Orville Wright was jubilant because he had been airborne in a glider for 9¾ minutes. The present duration record for motorless flight is 40 hours 51 minutes, held by a Frenchman; but during the war a German set up an unofficial record of 53 hours 52 minutes. The distance record is held by a Russian woman who flew 465 miles, and the height record by an American who reached 42,220 feet.

People often ask Wills why he worries about gliding in an age of jet-propulsion and faster-than-sound power flight. "That," he says, "is like asking a yachtsman why he keeps on sailing when he could take a ticket in the *Queen Elizabeth*." The parallel, he thinks, is very close; and, just as a sailing boat can provide relaxation for an old salt or education for a young one, so gliding can provide amusement and training for pilots. One of the most enthusiastic glidermen in Britain, and holder of the national distance and altitude records is Flight Lieutenant A. W. Bedford, Farnborough test pilot.

Wills still keeps his "A" licence to fly ordinary aircraft, and during the war he was a ferry pilot flying almost every type of machine, so he speaks with wide experience when he says that power

Wills adjusts his timing clock. Gliders are easily wrecked on landing but few pilots get hurt

flying has become monotonous. "Every flight in a sailplane," he says, "is different and exciting. You never know just how it will develop."

Sometimes these developments are more exciting than the pilot has bargained for, but they are rarely fatal. Insurance companies treat sailplanes as poor risks, but this is because they are easily wrecked by inexperienced pilots on landing. From most of these crashes, the pilots emerge unscathed.

One of Wills's narrowest escapes occurred when he was trying to make a flight from a point in the Swiss Alps near St. Moritz, over Lake Como, down to the north Italian plains. This was a route which had never been flown before by a sailplane and, when he was about half-way down one side of the lake, Wills found himself losing height without any upward air current to help him on his way. In the language of gliding, he had "run out of lift," which is the equivalent of a motorist running out of petrol.

Only One Landing Place

The ground below was decidedly rugged, and would have wrecked both man and machine. The only possibility seemed to be "ditching" in the lake and swimming to land, which would have meant total loss of the machine. Then, on the far shore, Wills spotted a splash of green which looked like a level field. At the rate he was losing height, he had about twelve miles in hand, and he estimated he could reach the field with inches to spare. By stretching his glide to its absolute maximum he came down safely on what local inhabitants confirmed was the only possible landing ground anywhere in the region.

Despite this narrow escape, Wills thinks gliding in the Swiss Alps is more stimulating than anywhere else he has been. Describing one flight he made there a few years ago, he said: "I never hope to live through such glory again. It was a sailplane pilot's idea of Elysium." On this flight he had been up to 17,000 feet, and flown past snow-capped mountains of 14,000 feet. "What could be more perfect," he asks, "than sitting in the cockpit, munching chocolate, with bright sun and blue sky above me, thousands of white-topped peaks below, and nothing to do but slide gently and silently along in dead-smooth, silky air?" But life in a sailplane cockpit is not always so idyllic, nor the air so silky. Often, after a long flight, Wills, who is too tall to fit comfortably in the average cockpit, has been unable to sit down with comfort for several days.

Glider pilots reach high altitudes by taking advantage of the upward air currents in large cumulus clouds of the thunderstorm type, and these, by their very nature, mean a rough ride. Distance flights are accomplished by using the less turbulent air currents known as thermals, which are caused by the sun heating the ground. The life of a thermal is limited, so a pilot gains as much altitude from it as he can, then moves on, hoping to find another thermal before his natural downwards glide forces him to land.

The men who worked out this technique of thermal soaring were only copying the birds, which are experts at it. When Wills went to South Africa, he was the first man to take a glider up in thermal flight over the high veldt, and every time he started spiralling in a thermal he found himself joined by a group of vultures.

Fascinated by the regularity of their behaviour he began making careful notes, and saw that he was always joined first by one bird, then by others which would arrive in small groups. He also noted that the vultures would never accompany him above 3,000 feet. By making a few more calculations, he decided that the gaps between each group of arrivals represented 3,000 feet in flying-time. Wills decided that this figure must represent the effective range of a vulture's vision.

Thus, he held, they would not fly above this height so as not to lose sight of possible prey on the ground, and they kept roughly the same distance apart in the air to cover the widest possible area in their search for food. When one bird spotted prey (or, in the case of the glider, the chance of an easy soaring spell in an upwards current) he would fly towards it. The birds within 3,000 feet of this bird would see its movement and tag along; the birds within 3,000 feet of them would follow in a third wave, and so on throughout the network. Wills advanced this as the answer to a problem which had long troubled desert travellers: how could a seemingly empty sky suddenly be filled with a flock of vultures descending on one victim?

Wills, who is deeply concerned because the Government has not revived its small prewar subsidy to gliding clubs, often points out to officials that the sailplane is a useful instrument of research in several important fields. Not only can it extend our knowledge of birds and the basic principles of flight, but it is an ideal way to investigate air currents (of great meteorological interest), and also a cheap and convenient means of testing new methods of aircraft construction.

Testing The Invasion Defences

During the war, Wills was one of two glider pilots chosen to test defences against a glider invasion. The authorities wanted to know whether all-wood aircraft would be registered by radar and whether they would be spotted by the Air Observer Corps; so, at the height of the Battle of Britain, Wills and Wing-Commander G. M. Buxton were towed half-way over to France in unarmed, plywood sailplanes, and left to make their own way back at thirty-five miles an hour.

They kept this up for three weeks, and proved that sailplanes could be plotted on radar; but—to the alarm of everyone—they also proved that it was almost impossible for them to be picked up by visual spotters. On one occasion, Wills, on a flight which had been notified to the Observer Corps, was not seen by anyone until he was within 300 yards of an English aerodrome.

This was the only time during the war that Wills was able to do any gliding, but since 1945, weather permitting, he has been in the air every weekend. He lives close to the aerodrome at Maidenhead, so that no time is wasted when conditions are good, and his wife has become accustomed to driving a car towing a thirty-five-foot trailer to wherever he may land. The glider is dismantled, stowed in the trailer, and Mrs. Wills drives home, generally with her husband sound asleep in the back seat.

Quick "retrieving," as his wife's work is known in gliding circles, is particularly important in contest flying, when pilots are in the air every day for a week or more and must get back to the aerodromes with the minimum delay so that machines can be reassembled and men rested. Some Continental pilots keep in touch with their retrievers by two-way radio, but British glider pilots have not yet been able to get hold of a suitable British-made set.

Queen's Vanguard To The Rescue

On one occasion, Mrs. Wills was driving along when the back axle of the towing car broke. She brought it to rest without further mishap, and was wondering disconsolately what she could do when a motor-cycle policeman roared around the corner, drew up with a squeal of brakes, and said: "Get your car into the side immediately. Her Majesty the Queen is due in a few minutes." She replied: "I'll try, if you like, but if I move the car an inch there's nothing to stop the back wheel coming right off, and then the whole road will be blocked."

More police arrived and, after a hasty conference, Her Majesty's vanguard converted themselves into a high-speed rescue squad. They drove off to find the nearest garage with a breakdown van, which appeared in the nick of time. The car and trailer were towed away and the axle repaired.

With long experience, Mrs. Wills can estimate very closely where and when her husband is likely to land, and is often on the spot within half an hour. At club dinners, and elsewhere, Wills likes to pay tribute to the part she has played in his gliding career. "A woman of remarkable persistence," he said on one of these occasions recently. "I estimate that, during our married life, she has chased me more than 75,000 miles."

THE END

Venetian Bird

by ***VICTOR CANNING***

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR SEABRIGHT

Mercer was the fugitive now. There was only one person who could save him—and that was Uccello

Ignoring the unconscious Mercer, they watched the figure in the boat below. Uccello took aim

ALL VENICE HAD TURNED OUT to welcome Nervi, the poet and people's hero. Crowds lined the canal banks, cheering him. But in a room overlooking the processional route, a man with a rifle was waiting to kill him. And in the same room, Edward Mercer, an English inquiry agent, lay unconscious, himself about to be shot.

For Mercer, this was the climax to a fantastic situation. He had come to Italy on a straightforward job, to find a man called Gian Uccello, who had earned a reward for saving a rich American's son during the war.

It was a woman who had got Mercer into this mess—Adriana Medova, the beautiful director of Count Boria's Palazzo art galleries in Venice. At first, Adriana was afraid to tell him that Uccello, a wanted man, was her husband and that Count Boria was helping him escape from the country. When Mercer refused the count's bribe to drop the case, she confided in him but, by arranging a meeting, led him into a trap. The count's two hired assassins beat him up. Mercer, uncertain whether Adriana had known of the trap, took refuge with the only person he could trust—Rosa Melitus, an old-time colleague.

Next day, following up a clue, he went to the Orfeo glassworks, a factory owned by Boria. There, he overheard the count, an army colonel, and Longo, a naval officer, discussing details of Nervi's assassination. Their plan was to stir up trouble so they could step in and take over the country.

What Mercer didn't know was that Uccello was watching him. Nor did Spadoni, the local police chief, who thought Uccello was dead. The records showed him as a traitor and murderer; if they had held a photograph, too, Spadoni would have recognized Uccello as Cassana, the man who was on the police payroll to watch Mercer. . . .

Uccello was watching when Mercer entered the glassworks. As he tried to escape, Uccello surprised him and knocked him out.

Now, on the following day—the day of Nervi's arrival in Venice—Mercer lay unconscious in a room of the Palazzo overlooking the canal. In the same room, Uccello and Longo were waiting. They had their orders: as the State gondola bearing Nervi came into view, Uccello would pick him off with a rifle, then escape, leaving Longo to kill Mercer and put the rifle by his hand. Longo's story would be that he'd caught Nervi's assassin red-handed—and the money planted on Mercer's body would bear him out. . . .

PART 6

The Frame-up

LONGO shifted his weight from one leg to the other. Time seemed to be sucked out of the room, leaving it cold and small and barren. The prow of a barge nicked the edge of the silk curtain and with the caution of a sluggardly monster the boat edged into view, riding flat-chested on the dark waters. He saw the rowers ease their oars, the sheen of sunlight on the silk of their knee-breeches, and the three men in the stern; two sitting, blunt, truncated figures, their heads moving in ritual bobs, and the other, standing alone, tall, an arm spread to the sky. Uccello began to take aim.

The hungry voices of men and women, rough with emotion, chanted raggedly . . . "Nervi! Nervi! Viva Nervi! Viva . . . !" Then, like a long, thirsty sigh, sucked voraciously into the black heart of the crowded boats, "Vivaaaaaa . . . !"

Uccello fired. The tall figure in the gondola span round suddenly as though somewhere in the crowd a familiar voice had called unexpectedly. A hand was raised to his breast. The echoes of the shot bickered angrily over the canal. Nervi fell, and a great sigh tore itself painfully from the packed boats. The noise died, and it seemed that all the silence in the world

The policeman looked up in surprise, reaching for his revolver. As he tugged at the holster, Mercer's feet caught him squarely in the chest

was slowly gathering out there on the waters.

Longo turned, jumped across Mercer's body, and went to the door, his hand going down to the key. Behind him he heard the movement of Uccello, and then the thump of a rifle being tossed to the ground.

"*Addio*. . . ." The whisper floated across the room and he answered it with a lift of his hand, his head drawn back now to the window, where a fury of noise had risen. He turned the key and opened the door a few inches. The setting must be right, his part perfect.

The rifle lay on the carpet by Mercer. One hand was thrown out as though he reached for it and the other sprawled away towards the armchair. Longo put his hand in his pocket for his revolver. As he did so, he kicked one of the arms away from the rifle, destroying the cruciform sprawl of the body. He brought the revolver up in his right hand, steadying it towards the still head. Outside, a sudden savage roaring had started from the crowd.

SUDDENLY, from outside the room, a child's voice called anxiously: "Do-do! Do-do!" A small brown shape flashed across the carpet and fawned about Mercer's unconscious head. Angry and frightened, Longo kicked out at the puppy, which slid across the floor yelping.

"Do-do!" Ninetta was in the room, running across to him.

"Signor, where's Do-do?" She stopped in front of Longo, looking around. Anger shaped itself to panic and Longo put a hand on her shoulder, twisting her about.

"Get out of here!" He pulled her away, pushing her towards the door, and the urgency in him was desperate. The puppy yelped from the window and she heard it. She twisted and ran to it. He watched her, helpless. She stopped, seeing Mercer, and bent down.

"Is he hurt, signor?" Her head came round, the eyes solemn.

"Take the puppy and go, Ninetta." He spoke softly, the gentleness masking the savageness he felt.

So long as Ninetta was in the room he could do nothing. Even now it was bad enough. He would have to say that Mercer had recovered and attacked him again when the girl had gone and he had been forced to shoot. But time, precious time, was slipping past him. The puppy sidled warily towards Longo and he caught it. "Here, take him and go."

He put his hand on her shoulder and she went towards the door. As she went, she said innocently: "I was sitting in the window on the stairs and there was a noise that frightened Do-do. . . ."

"Yes, yes. . . . It was Signor Mercer. He has been a wicked man. . . . Now go." He held the door, pushing her through. Five minutes' grace the count had allowed for him. Every second counted now.

"What's going on, signor?"

Minelli, the caretaker, was facing him, breathing heavily from the stairs.

"I was looking for her when I heard a shot. . . ." His words trailed off as he saw the revolver in Longo's hand. Then, with an alacrity which surprised Longo, he pushed the girl behind him and reached out for the gun.

It was out of his hands now—Longo realized that. "Don't be such a fool, Minelli," he said wearily. "It's the Englishman. I heard the shot, too. He's there."

Minelli rushed past him and looked across at Mercer. "He did it?"

"He was just making off when I arrived. I had to hit him before he could use his gun. . . ."

"*Dio mio!*" He looked from Mercer towards the window and shook his head. "If that crowd ever get their hands on him, they'll tear him apart."

VOICES and footsteps sounded on the stairs and Ninetta drew back from the door as the count appeared with some of his guests behind him. He stood there for a moment taking in the scene. Then he turned to Longo, holding out one arm to keep the people behind him from entering. "Is he dead?"

"No. I knocked him out as he was trying to escape."

The muscles of the old face tightened gently. "Who is it?"

"Signor Mercer, the Englishman. . . ."

The count made a gesture to Minelli. "Take everyone downstairs and keep them there until the police come. You stay here, Longo." He turned as Minelli crossed the room and raised his hands to the people outside. "Please . . . it will help if you do as I say. . . ."

When they were all gone, he went over to Mercer, who was beginning to stir. He stood above him, observing him.

"Close the window."

Longo moved over to the window and shut it.

"Why didn't you shoot him?"

"That damned child came in. I had to have

Continued on page 27

Lionel Gamlin, the teenagers' radio favourite

by DAVID CLAYTON

The B.B.C.'s odd-job man has a vacation task—keeping younger listeners from under mother's feet during the summer holiday

SEATED AT THE MICROPHONE one day in the summer of 1936, Lionel Gamlin, then a raw, fledgling announcer on probation, waited a little uneasily for the red light on the studio wall to stop flickering, so that he could read the weather forecast and the morning's news. For Gamlin, this was to be a great day.

After only six weeks, during which time he had been allowed to do little more than interrupt brass bands to warn shipping of dirty weather off Lundy, he had, in the language of Portland Place, been Sent For. The Sender, after greeting him with the usual curt nod and thirty-second stare cultivated among the higher echelons of the B.B.C. as a badge of rank, had informed him that today he was a man; today he was to be entrusted with the news.

With a well-modulated "G'd l'ck," uttered through a stiff upper (and lower) lip, ringing in his ears, Gamlin proceeded to the studio, hoping with all his heart that on this, his first time out, the coming bulletin would contain nothing about Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwll-llantysiliogogogoch.

Fortunately, the past twelve hours had produced nothing newsworthy from that hamlet and, with the red light now at the steady, he cast his eyes downwards to start on the weather forecast. No weather forecast. Gamlin looked again. Still no weather forecast. There was a balanced assortment of everything else, from Hitler's rantings to Channel swimmers, but nothing at all about the weather.

Chuckle, Gurgle Or Snort

He looked at the engineer through the glass partition and failed to catch his eye. He glanced up at the studio clock, and his stomach tightened into a knot as the second hand completed its first circle. Gamlin took a deep breath.

"I am afraid," he said, in the tone a refined undertaker might use to announce that when he opened up the coffin the body was missing, "I am afraid this morning's weather has not yet arrived." Then, for a full second and a half, to cover his embarrassment, he gave a quiet but audible chuckle, gurgle, or snort.

In the intervening fifteen years that sound, like its perpetrator, has become famous, and after much retelling among the old guard around Portland Place has now been promoted to a hysterical yell, a maniac's giggle and even a death rattle. Gamlin, who, of course, was Sent For immediately afterwards, still insists that it was nothing but a slight visitation of frog-in-the-throat. At the official inquest into the Case of the Missing Weather, he was able to convince the curt nodders of this without much difficulty.

Since then he has outlived both this initial bloomer and many of those who sat in judgment upon him. For thirteen years, except for one or two short return excursions into his original profession of schoolmastering, Gamlin's well-groomed figure has been a familiar sight around Broadcasting House.

All Things To All Listeners

He has been a household name in radio for many years, but, unlike the Pickleses, the Kavanaghs, the Dimblebys and the Snagges, he has not, until recently, been associated in the mind of the listening public with any particular branch of radio. He has been news reader, commentator, book reviewer, dramatic actor, scriptwriter, producer and much more besides. As a radio personality he is all things to all listeners, according to which age group they belong.

To prewar listeners he is Gamlin the first "stooge announcer" in such variety programmes as *The White Coons*, or *Bandwagon* with "Big" Askey and "Stinker" Murdoch, or as an interviewer in *In Town Tonight*, in which twelve years ago he was pioneering the same stunts for which Brian Johnston is famous today.

Anti-aircraft and searchlight personnel sitting out the phoney war on lonely gunsights, tending

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPH BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON

Gamlin's fans often drop in at his office for a chat. They are always cheerfully received

Recording a *Hullo There!* programme: Gamlin (centre) with Marcel Stellman and Wilfrid Thomas

their silent Bofors guns and their cabbage patches, remember him as the man behind their own programme, *Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer*.

Later, when Europe was overrun, tens of thousands of French, Dutch, Czech, Polish and other Resistance fighters, listening often at the risk of their lives, learned rudimentary English from the programme which, with the help of Elizabeth Cowell, he beamed their way daily. Evacuee children in North America and Canada, many of whom are now married and have children, remember him as the cheery Lionel who kept them in touch with parents at home to the strains of the "London Calling" march.

Since the war, narrowing his field—or having it narrowed for him, and a little worried by it all—his name has come to be associated with younger listeners, from tots to teenagers, as the man who creates their own special programmes and gives them what they want. As a result, to half a million Boy Scouts, through *Jamboree*, he is only slightly less famous than Lord Rowallan, the chief. Gamlin has been a lifelong Scout.

In *Personally Speaking*, he has brought precocious junior book, film, theatre and music critics to the microphone to air their views, sometimes entertainingly and sometimes not. He has been a frequent visitor to *Children's Hour*, both as actor and storyteller, for twenty years; last year, when the beloved Uncle Mac left broadcasting for journalism, he was widely tipped as successor for the £1,360 a year post. Gamlin, since 1946 a busy free-lance, probably makes that amount in two months.

Keeping The Family Quiet

Soon, for the third year in succession, he will be on the air daily, Monday to Saturday, all through the long summer holiday, in the teenagers' own programme, *Hullo There!*, which was the brainchild of Tom Chalmers, then head of the Light Programme. Although, like Gamlin, a bachelor, Chalmers knew enough about family life in the raw to understand that, to many thousands of harassed mothers, holidays could be sheer purgatory, especially when it rained, and with the dinner still to be cooked. He thereupon suggested a programme of holiday interest, timed to coincide with lunch preparation.

The programme was a success from the start. The expertly planned talks on hobbies, ranging from stamp collecting to seashells, the visits from such celebrities as Fabian of the Yard, special music, adventure serials and talks by teenagers themselves, started a daily tradition of a hushed half-hour in many homes. Mothers, alarmed at the unusual silence, began to listen, too. As a result, the programme has now been moved to 1.15 p.m. to give everybody a chance to listen.

"Dear Lionel," wrote a teenage listener from Gamlin's home town, Birkenhead, "you can't pull the wool over our eyes. You say it's our programme, but everyone knows that all it's for is to give Mum a bit of quiet." In answer to that letter, Gamlin denied that he had ever tried any woolpulling. He could have added that he had learned the lesson of microphone honesty from no less a personage than George Bernard Shaw and, except for one excusable instance, had always made it his first principle.

The incident with Shaw happened when Gamlin was still in the fledgeling stage, not long after the weather forecast hullaballoo and just before the fateful afternoon when, while putting on a gramophone record, he inadvertently slid the speed control to high and was once again Sent For to explain how it was that Paul Robeson came to sound like Donald Duck.

Shaw had arrived ten minutes early for a broadcast to schools which Gamlin was to announce. For the first five minutes Gamlin talked while the Sage sat silent and thoughtful. When he ran out of words, there was a dead silence, until Shaw leaned forward and gave the microphone a respectful stroke with his finger. "This, my friend," he said in his Irish brogue, "this is a devilish contraption. Diabolical. Never try to deceive it, for you never will."

Mistake That Proved A Winner

Gamlin has failed to take that advice but once, and in doing so started what is now one of television's most popular features. He was, at the time, appearing as compère in *Monday Night At Seven* (now *Eight*), during which he presented "Puzzle Corner." In one edition he made such a glaring mistake that thousands of irate listeners reached for pen and paper to point it out.

Breezily, on the following Monday, he announced that he had made the mistake deliberately, and from now on, just for the fun of it, would not only go on making one mistake a week but would also give them a clue. Thus was born the "Deliberate Mistake" which Ronnie Waldman now presents on television. Some time ago, when Gamlin substituted for Waldman, who was ill in hospital, he reminded viewers that he was its originator—and received many letters calling him a liar.

All the programmes with which Gamlin is connected are planned in a tiny office high up in a building just to the side of Broadcasting House. One wall is decorated with an intricate chart showing his broadcasting schedules for the next three or four months, kept up to date by his secretary, Joan Archer.

The mail to this office is a heavy one. It includes letters from boys protesting that as they have to go back to school early in September they will miss the end of the serial—and what does he intend to do about it? There are letters from teenage girls protesting that the boys are getting more attention in the programme than they are. There are the inevitable invitations from Scout troops asking him to open bazaars, and from boys' and girls' schools inviting him to make prize-day speeches. And there are always youthful visitors who drop in for a chat, are cheerfully received and then find themselves suddenly deserted as Gamlin, closely followed by Joan Archer carrying script, stopwatch, pencil and pad, dashes to one of the studios for a show.

At the microphone he still confesses to a thirty-second panic, but soon recovers. The only outward sign of strain is a rapid nicking of his right thumbnail with his left, but as he has learned on Joan Archer's instructions to do this below table level, nobody sees it. When the programme is over, he slouches for a moment, and then sends everyone away happy with the comment for which he has been famous for ten years—"Boys and girls—that was really, really good."

The Voice Of The Newsreels

Away from broadcasting Gamlin is a busy man. He has written, produced and narrated pageants for the R.A.F. and the Royal Artillery. Since 1938 he has been a newsreel commentator, and has also somehow found time to record the whole of Priestley's *Good Companions*, and *London Belongs to Me*, by Norman Collins, for the St. Dunstan's Recording Service for the blind.

Twice in his career he has left the B.B.C. to return to schoolmastering, the profession which he took up after an interlude as an insurance clerk and a season with the Liverpool Playhouse, where he appeared with another unknown named Rex Harrison. Three years at Cambridge were followed by a year of teaching, half a season at the Stratford Memorial Theatre, and a brief period at the Gate Theatre in 1936 in the sophisticated revues written by Robert MacDermot and Diana Morgan.

Today, Gamlin lives comfortably, almost sumptuously, in a bachelor flat only a jogtrot from Broadcasting House. There he works late and early on his scripts, a novel which he is for ever starting, tearing up for pipecleaners and starting again, and a play which he hopes will be produced in the West End in the coming autumn. He has already written a mildly funny book called *Don't Be A-Freud* in collaboration with Anthony Gilbert, the artist. His primer on how to become a successful broadcaster, *You're On The Air*, although five years old, is still required reading among teenagers who would like to grow up to be Stuart Hibberd. In it he sets out the golden rules for being a good announcer (keep your voice up at the end of sentences); how to broadcast to children (don't go down on mental all-fours); and how to handle an interview (don't be lah-de-dah or whimsy-whamsy). There is nothing in the book, however, about the Flippin' Barrow Boy—an episode Gamlin would prefer to forget.

During his time as an interviewer with *In Town Tonight*, a colourful barrow boy had been brought to the studios. Although well schooled in doing sums in his head, he was not very good "at this flippin' readin' n' writin' lark."

He Took The Wrong Turning

Gamlin wrote out the script in large block letters and then sent him to the canteen for a cup of tea and some private study. But the barrow boy took the wrong turning, somehow found himself in a neighbouring bar and returned just before the broadcast full of praise for the local brew. A private and highly prized recording of Gamlin in action on that occasion is still in existence. It runs something like this:

GAMLIN: And in town tonight we have ——— ———, who has worked as a barrow boy since ———.

BARROW BOY: Now I've gawn 'n lorst me flippin' plice.

GAMLIN: ———ever since he left school at the age of———

BARROW BOY: Lorst me flippin' plice, that's what I've done—lorst me flippin' plice———

GAMLIN: I'm sorry, but———

BARROW BOY: Lorst me flippin' plice. Lorst me flippin' plice. Lorst me flipping plice.

Music (loud) to accompaniment of cry of "lorstmeflippin'plicelorstmeflippin'plice" dying away in the distance. THE END

Whipped cream walnut

by H. E. L. MELLERSH

ILLUSTRATED BY MARCIA LANE FOSTER

Benny knew it would go wrong. Now he was a thief on the run. And, what was worse, he'd lost Lolly

LITTLE BENNY, WITH tear-filled and angry eyes, looked from one to the other—from his elder brother, Frank, lounging against the mantelpiece, to Stanley, perched self-satisfiedly on the edge of the table and swinging his beefy legs. He disliked Stanley as much as he admired his elder brother.

"I only said it was wrong to steal," he said.

Stanley gave a short, derisive laugh. "Don't be such a kid," he said. "It isn't stealing, it's *winning*."

Benny looked at Frank, but his brother looked away.

Stanley continued. "Bit of sport, that's all! You don't think that the old girl behind the counter'll ever miss what we take, do you?"

Benny had to admit to himself that the old girl probably wouldn't. He had to admit, too, that on the couple of occasions or so when, while having an ice-cream in the little shop, they had indulged in the pilfering of a sweet or two, it had all been rather exciting. But still. . . . Benny was feeling stubborn about it this time. He was frightened, too.

At that moment the door flew open and Lolly rushed in. Lolly—short for a stud name much more difficult and less endearing—was Benny's dachshund pup. She came pattering in, all flapping ears and ingratiating eagerness, and proceeded with furiously wagging tail to twist herself around her master's feet. Benny picked her up and had to bend his head back to avoid having his face covered with licks.

"Oh, let's push off!" said Stanley.

"You want to come along, Benny?" Frank asked. He still looked away. "You know how Lolly loves ice-cream."

Benny had a vision of Lolly throwing herself up on her hind legs, to sit with rocklike immobility while he broke off a bit of his wafer, scooped off some of the ice-cream and dropped wafer and ice straight down into a mouth that opened and shut with supremely accurate timing—Bli-*app*! He loved doing it. And Lolly certainly loved ice-cream.

"But——" said Benny.

"But what?" Frank was beginning to look a little irritated.

"Oh, don't be a funk!" said his brother Frank finally. He looked at him this time.

"I'm *not*, Frankie!" Benny's face was very red and he was nearly crying again.

In his anger and humiliation he upset Lolly roughly out of his arms, and the little dog, having so far to go to the floor and so little leg with which to take up the shock, yelped and rolled over on to her side. Indeed for a moment she was winded, and after the yelp lay still for a fraction of a second.

That fraction was enough for Benny. He swept her up into his arms—and the dog, quite revived, covered his face with frantic and apologetic kisses.

"It wasn't *your* fault!" said Benny fiercely to the puppy. "Would you like some ice-cream, Lolly?"

The matter was settled.

It was market day and the little town was busy. Benny was worried because he had forgotten Lolly's lead. Then, on the way there, Frank had said: "Brazen it out if she gets suspicious," and Stanley: "Everyone for himself if it comes to it. I shall just say: 'Beat it!'" They had never talked like that before. . . .

The shop was just a little way up a quiet and unfrequented side-street. Then they went in—strolling in casually, hands in pockets. Benny felt vaguely that they were overacting the free-and-easy business a bit. "Come on, Lolly!" he called. But Lolly was in already.

There, in front of her rows of big bottles and behind the rather tawdry little array of baskets and piled glass stands, stood the old girl herself. She had somewhat streakily peroxided hair piled in front, a fat, cross little face, and an angry, over-lipsticked little mouth. Benny suddenly loathed her.

"Three ices, please." Stanley might have been ordering champagne.

The old girl gave them a fishlike stare and retired through an open doorway to the back. Now was the time! But it needed skill to remove a sweet or two without disturbing the rest. Frank took a few sugared almonds. He was clumsy and one fell. The noise it made was terrific!

BENNY had *known* things would go wrong. They all stood petrified, including the dog. But nothing happened. Stanley very cleverly picked up the sweet and put it back. At that moment the old girl came back.

"One of your almonds fell off," said Stanley patronizingly.

"Oh, did it!" She sniffed and retired again.

This was a trap—Benny knew it was a trap. Why didn't somebody else come in, and put a stop to it all? He felt sick, and he didn't want the ice-cream. Lolly begged, but it didn't seem any fun at all.

Stanley's fat hand reached up delicately and hovered. There was a dish piled with a pyramid of whipped cream walnuts. Stanley's hand stopped hovering. It whipped out quickly and removed a whipped cream walnut.

The old girl, with disconcerting suddenness, reappeared. Benny felt a hand being put into his pocket.

"May we have," said Stanley royally, "a quarter of a pound of your peppermint lumps."

"Yes, if you 'ave the money—*and* the coupons."

"Why, of course," said Stanley.

But the old girl stood there, waiting. This was unexpected.

Stanley began to bluff. "You've got some money haven't you, nipper. Where's that shilling you had?"

Benny hadn't shown Stanley a shilling. But

"Is this one of them?" asked the policeman, sizing up the boy. The fat man didn't look up

anything—oh, anything to get away. He nodded. Perhaps he had enough money.

He felt feverishly, moving the things in his pocket from side to side, the string, the matchbox with some lovely black pansy seeds in it—yes, and the whipped cream walnut that Stanley had placed there. He knew he was blushing scarlet. He felt himself sweating. And the beastly, lipsticked old girl just waited, and sniffed and waited.

He couldn't find the money. He pulled his hand out, empty.

And then Benny stared at his hand in cold horror. He went pale about the mouth. He couldn't stop looking at his hand. It was smeared pale brown with milk chocolate.

From somewhere a very long way off the old girl was saying: "I wonder if you *gentlemen* would mind emptying your pockets."

"*Beat it.*"

Stanley dived for the door, and it half shut after him. Frank grabbed it and pushed his younger brother in front of him. "To the right!" he shouted in Benny's ear, and disappeared to the left. Already there was no sign of Stanley. Benny slipped into the traffic of the main street, dodged round a portly woman carrying a large net shopping bag, and ran and ran and ran.

Very soon Benny found himself in a narrow alley. He stopped. Perhaps he was safe here. He could hear his breath making a rasping sound in his throat; his heart pounded and his gums ached. In front of him, a narrow glass-panelled door led into the back part of the town's best haberdasher's. It was brightly lit and looked cosy. There he would often go with his mother, and the girl behind the counter would smile at

him, and perhaps give him a scrap of ribbon at the end of a run. She had once. In the days before he was a thief. . . .

Footsteps were advancing up the alley, and Benny cowered into the wall. Then he saw that it was Stanley—hands in pockets and whistling with intense unconcern.

"Stanley!" cried Benny, joyfully.

Stanley hissed: "Shut up, you beastly little fool!" He pushed Benny against the wall so that he hit the back of his head, and then for good measure gave him a vicious hack on the shin. Stanley proceeded then on his elaborately careful way.

Benny was left to weep. He wept more from anger now than from misery.

"I'll get that whipped cream walnut," he sobbed to himself. "I'll get it and I'll smear it all over his face. I'll get hold of his wrist, and I'll twist his wrist, and twist and twist and twist until his nose touches the ground and he begs for mercy! Begs for——" And then he was brought up short. The terrible truth came to him suddenly and overwhelmed him. *He had lost Lolly!*

He was ashamed. He had run away and forgotten Lolly! Where was she? She'd get killed, she'd get run over! Benny started running again.

And now the noise and the crowds of the market fairly overwhelmed him. He made no sound; he dodged silently, in and out of the traffic in the centre of the street, round all the slow, fat, cumbersome people on the pavements.

Stall after stall towered up; noise after noise assailed his ears. The clang of hanging saucepans in the breeze; strident voices: "Nice white celery." "A shilling a pound them termaters!" Benny rushed across the road because he saw a dog, and very nearly got himself run over—a screech of brakes that he hardly noticed. It was the wrong dog.

He came to a stall with puppies for sale, fluffy mongrels that huddled and gambolled feebly inside a sort of wooden pen. One, with solemn, wide blue eyes, stared at Benny and whimpered and struggled to get over the barrier. Benny stared back and put out a tentative hand.

"Leave him be, sonny!"

Benny jumped. But, of course, he was a thief. . . . He had forgotten. He turned—and saw a policeman. The policeman was standing on the pavement's edge, and staring—yes, surely, staring at Benny the thief.

With weak legs Benny sidled out of the crowd and away. Had Lolly gone home, and should he go home, too? But then the policeman might follow him, and he would be giving the other two away. Benny tried to recall just what had happened when they ran out of the shop. Had anyone called "Police!" or "Stop thief!"? It had all been so confused; he couldn't remember.

Benny had left the market now, and the streets were quieter. Nor was there any sign of the policeman. Benny decided to risk a call. "Lolly, Lolly!" he cried. "Lolly, Lolly!"

Some bigger boys, idling about the place, pricked up their ears. They gathered round and began to laugh.

"Lolly!" they shouted, with joy and derision. "Lolly! Lollipop!"

"I'm calling a dog," said Benny with dignity.

"He's calling a dog!"

"Lollipop!"

This was somehow the last and worst indignity. Benny was consumed with anger. Big as they were, he charged them—and they scattered. He singled out one of them and ran after him, hard. But even this last of his tormentors was soon lost. Benny looked round, and realized that he was in a strange street; it was a long, narrow back street, and very quiet and empty, though somewhere in the distance he could hear the noise of the town and the market.

Benny walked along and wondered whether he should start calling again. Then he thought he heard something. He stopped and listened intently. Yes, it was unmistakably the whine and yelp of a little dog chained up.

Benny ran, and came to a big double gate. He managed to push up the heavy latch, and to swing open one side of it. He was in a tiled yard, with the jumbled, sloping roofs of the backs of houses facing him. And there, tied by a string to a foot-scraper outside an open back door, was Lolly. Benny rushed up to her, knelt down, and, impeded by the wriggling body, began to undo the string.

"Hi!"

Benny looked up, to see a man standing in the

open doorway. He was a bald, fat man, with his sleeves rolled up.

"That your dog?" he asked.

"Yes," said Benny, timorously. "Thank you for minding him."

"You come in here!" said the man.

Benny undid the last knot of Lolly's string and obeyed reluctantly. Lolly followed with her tail up. There was a tiled floor, a kitchen table and some chairs, and a sink with the tap dripping.

"Sit down!" said the fat man, and sat down himself, heavily. Lolly smelt about under the sink.

"Three of you, weren't there?" the man said.

A dawning and horrible suspicion deepened in Benny's mind. He looked round, and there through another door he could see the white gleam of an ice-cream freezer.

The distant shop bell rang, and the man took his eyes off Benny, rose slowly, and went into the shop. "Wait here," he said.

Benny waited in dumb agony, nursing Lolly for company. The man came back at last. He lowered himself into his chair again.

"Well," he said. "Got anything to say?"

Benny looked at the floor. "I'm awfully . . . sorry!" he said.

"*Sorry!* I should think you are blooming well sorry! How d'you think I'm going to earn my living with people like you three about?"

Benny hadn't thought of it in that way. He stared hard at the fat man and with very bright eyes. "I'm s——"

"Oh, for Pete's sake cut it out!" cried the man—just brutally enough to check Benny's tears. And then: "I've told the police, y'know!"

Benny began to cry in earnest.

The man seemed crosser than ever. "Well, what on earth did you expect?" he cried. "Thieving little. . . ." Just as the fat man trailed off into a grumbling silence, Lolly began to scratch. She was no longer interested in the sink.

Between sobs, Benny said: "Don't scratch."

Lolly stopped, and looked up.

"Bring your dog up proper, eh?" said the man.

"Yes," said Benny.

"Do any tricks?"

Benny blew his nose. "No." And then: "Well, not real——"

"Beg, eh?"

"Oh, yes, she can beg."

For answer the man slowly stretched out a leg and, sliding his hand over the fat paunch, dived into his pocket and produced a pen-knife. Then, as slowly as ever, he opened it.

Benny wondered what was coming next. But the man was looking at him again. "Let's 'ave that chocolate," he said.

Benny blushed crimson, and dived into his own pocket. The whipped cream walnut was even stickier than ever and slightly fluffy. He handed it across. Then, sucking his fingers and not quite able to stop himself appreciating the taste, he watched the proceedings.

Once more the fat man got up. He waddled across to a plate rack, took a plate and waddled back with it. Now he was cutting up the whipped cream walnut into melting little blobs.

"Can 'e do 'Trust, Paid For'?"

"It's a she," said Benny bravely, always a stickler for correctness where his dog was concerned.

The man laughed suddenly, then looked very stern, as though remembering he was dealing with an unscrupulous thief.

"All right! Can *she* do 'Trust, Paid For'?"

"No."

"We'll teach her."

Lolly was already begging. The man carefully put one hand under her chin, and balanced a piece of chocolate on the little dog's nose. But it fell off and Lolly made a dive.

"No!" shouted the man, and Lolly, looking apprehensive, left it. The man laughed heartily, and tried again, but he was still unsuccessful.

"Here, you 'ave a go!"

By the time that they got to the last lump, Benny, by dint of saying "Trust-Paid-For!" almost in one breath, could pretend that Lolly had learnt the trick. He giggled happily and looked up.

In the doorway, helmeted and hands on belt, stood a policeman. That, for Benny, was quite the most shocking experience of the whole shocking day.

"Is this one of them?" said the policeman, looking at Benny.

The fat man didn't look up. He was stroking one of Lolly's ears. "No," he said. "Think I'd sit here playing with him if it was? I'd tan his hide and teach him behaviour. Have you found any of them?" This time he did look up.

Benny was holding himself so stiffly he could hardly breathe.

The policeman said: "No, but let me know if you see them again. They just need a good frightening, I should think."

He went after a little while. The fat man remained silent. Benny stared at the floor. When he did look up, the man was staring at him.

"You heard what I told the policeman—about what you needed?"

"Yes," Benny said.

"Think you deserve it?"

Benny was silent.

"And you heard what the policeman said?"

"Yes."

"Right." The man lifted Lolly and put her in Benny's arms. "You've had your fright. Never do it again, understand? Or I'll take your dog in exchange. Now then, hop it!"

"Thank you," Benny said. "Thank you very much. I'm s——"

"Hop it!"

Benny hopped it. THE END

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Send with your entry TWO of these seals from Gibbs Dentifrice tins

READ THESE SIMPLE RULES

1. Any resident of Gt. Britain or N. Ireland may enter except employees of D. & W. Gibbs, Ltd., their Advertising Agents and members of their respective families.

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(a) the entry form on this page, or

(b) an entry form obtained from his Gibbs Dentifrice dealer, or

(c) a plain piece of paper on which he must print *all* the information required on the official entry form, including the statement "I have read and agree to abide by the rules of this competition", after which he must write his signature.

3. Only one entry form cut out from any one issue of this magazine may be submitted by each competitor.

4. Each entry form must be completed and sent with two seals in a properly stamped, sealed envelope (2½d. stamp) to Gibbs Magic Bubble Competition, Melbourne House, Aldwych, London, W.C.2, and arrive not later than 31st July, 1951.

5. Every entry will be judged by a panel of independent judges. Prizes will be awarded in order of merit to competitors whose entries show the greatest degree of skill in describing the advantages of Gibbs Dentifrice as a family teeth-cleanser.

6. No competitor may win more than one prize. In the event of a tie or ties, the prize or prizes will be divided.

7. The judges' decision will be final and legally binding.

8. The judges will include—a famous radio star, a newspaper writer, and a dental surgeon.

9. No entry will be returned but will become the property of D. & W. Gibbs, Ltd. No correspondence will be entered into in connection with the competition. No responsibility will be accepted by D. & W. Gibbs, Ltd., for entries, lost, damaged or delayed in the post.

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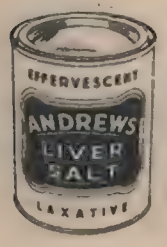

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G20/bJ/51

SISTER MARIE

Continued from page 14

whisper that accused her through the fanfare—some voice above the babel of the years. Then I turned back the knob. The music drained away, and slowly, after it, the spots of colour at the apex of her cheekbones.

Her eyes, I noticed, were fixed on a spot on the wall above my head; a photograph, among my theatre souvenirs, of Covent Garden. It showed the house lights glittering, the jewelled figures in the side boxes, a hint of vastness beneath the lofty dome. In the second it attracted her, I wondered if she could have been a singer. No, surely she was too slight. An artist, or perhaps . . . the rich girl and the actor? But her accent was of the people. She put my milk beside me on the bed-table. Our eyes met in the moment's tacit understanding of those who share an indiscretion they dare not commit to words. Then she gave her quick, nervous smile, turned, and was gone, leaving the incident more tantalizing than a dream.

Perhaps it was all the wished-up figment of a bored imagination. But that proved an unsatisfactory explanation in the light of the covert interest she continued taking in my theatre pictures. So I tried tempting her by changing the collection on my walls. I tried her with everything from Shakespeare scenes to close-ups of the more respectable variety acts. She glanced at them all with the same faint hint of recognition, as though they were distant acquaintances.

As the days followed one another, I became more and more intrigued by Sister Marie's past. And yet I could not bring myself to question her about it. So it went on, this charming, enthralling game between us.

Then the film location party invaded us and brought things to a head. A friend of mine who runs a small documentary unit got the contract for the exteriors of a new Independent Productions feature set in Switzerland. An Alpine rescue and some scenes outside a snowbound sanatorium were scheduled for location. I was able to arrange for the Convent (as we called the institution) to put up the unit and provide the locale for the sanatorium shots.

To appreciate what followed, I must give a rough idea of the layout of the Convent. Built in the worst tradition of Swiss concrete, it stood like an open-sided grey box facing the mountain pass and the funicular which served the ski centre. This being January, the unit and its equipment had to come up on the funicular. The wide side of the "box" was the sanatorium proper, a long three-storeyed building joined at each end by narrower four-storeyed wings.

With the idea of presenting an imposing façade to the public, the sanatorium block had been given a false front which joined up flush with the four-storeyed wings on either side, being merely a thin wall with the sloping roof hidden behind and some fifteen feet below it.

The nuns occupied one side wing, which was, of course, sealed off from us, and the top floor of the other held the chapel (used by both nuns and patients). The rest of this wing was given over to recreation and guest rooms, relics of the happy days when foreign patients could afford to invite their friends and relations to stay with them. It was in the guest wing that they found room for the location unit, its equipment, and a few thousand feet of film stock.

The party arrived after tea, and MacAllister, the director, came straight to my room. He was worried. "We've lost a day already, and it's costing me five bob a minute. Got any convenient glaciers around here, or a nice deep precipice?"

But before I could speak, he was off on a new grievance. "And the woman I've got to stand in for the snow rescue has to be temperamental. She's gone to bed now, mark you, with a sleeping tablet—right at the top of the block; to be nearer the stars, she said."

"It's the little room next door to the chapel, in the guest block," I explained helpfully. "You'll be on the ground floor. . . ."

"Fine, fine. Well, I've got to fix some lights. I want night-shots of this building. . . ." His footsteps clattered away.

PUTTING on a dressing-gown, I strolled out on to my balcony. It was dark before moonrise. In the courtyard below, torches were already flashing, and, as I watched, a floodlight showed someone wheeling out a camera stand. I could hear Mac shouting orders from the roof of the nuns' block, and wondered how he'd got there. Suddenly, from the same direction, came the whine and splutter of an arc lamp firing. The beam fanned out and, as if by magic, the cheap façade was turned to jet and ivory.

Sooner than I expected, the usual crowd of sightseers was collecting. From the funicular, from neighbouring chalets, and up the mountain pass they came; men and women in ski-suits, peasants, clerks and shop-girls, anxious mothers dragging children, and gentlemen in astrakhan. Strange how they're all attracted by the lights, like moths.

I felt a fluttering at my elbow and knew without looking who it was. In the vague reflected radiance, Sister Marie's hospital white seemed soft and quivering, reminding me of wings. By this time, more floodlamps were on, and spotlights touched the face of the building with nervous fingers. Outlined in the background, an unquiet monster, the crowd chafed and murmured.

Sister Marie touched my arm. "The cold, it is dangerous. Better to be inside, much better. . . ." But the warning was addressed more to herself than me. "Ah, these lights, these lights!" she burst out at last. "Look at them, like pieces of gold, tempting us. Why did you bring them here?"

I looked at her, and decided to

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"... probably either a big fish or a short putt"

chance it. "What do they mean to you?"

"Nothing. They mean nothing." She strained to convince herself and gave it up with a little shrug. She went on, almost with relief, "I knew them once, the lights and the people." Down below, a cable fused and sent up a fountain of blue and yellow sparks. The crowd sighed. "Yes! They were like that for me, once. But I wasn't brave. I wanted it all for nothing. I couldn't take the risks I had been born to take. One night I turned back, so they laughed at me. I ran away. I tried to turn to God. I thought I could escape them here, but you came, and still . . . the laughter. You come from that world; you will understand . . . my vanity."

She looked so young. So terribly young. Memory changed her face to a young girl's, betrayed, appealing, but without reproach. "I have sinned," she whispered.

Suddenly it wasn't fun any more. I turned from the lights into the silent bedroom. She followed through the darkness; only the click of my door behind her told me she had gone. Somehow I knew she was going to spend the night in the chapel. I wanted to comfort her; but because she was one of us, I knew there was nothing to say. I felt for the tube of sleeping tablets, and got into bed.

I AWOKE from troubled dreams to find Mac prodding me with the handle of an axe. "What do you use for sleeping—chloroform?"

I came awake with difficulty. "What is it? What's the matter?"

"Get your clothes on. Dear Lord, what a break! The insurance on the cameras expires tomorrow." He saw my uncomprehending gaze, and added pityingly, "There's a fire."

"What!" I sprang out of bed amid the fragments of my broken dream.

"Don't fash yourself, it's only destroying the guest block. Our stock went up. Something heated a can of film. We've managed not to save all the equipment that's over-insured. Lucky they've got plenty of appliances." He waved the axe. "We've cut down some wood partitions, and the boys have stopped the spread. Firemen are coming up on the funicular. What a country! Lucky no one's up aloft, couldn't get an escape up there . . . hey, what's eating you?"

Without stopping to enlighten him, I bundled my greatcoat round me and rushed out into the corridor. The place was veiled with smoke, and I choked in the sickening aftermath of burnt celluloid. Doors hung open, and every mobile patient seemed to have departed. I saw the Mother Superior supervising the removal of a stretcher case to the safe end of the block, and rushed up to her.

FOR a moment the calm of her face was ruffled by concern. "It is all right. By the mercy of God we are not in danger here. Go back to bed. I will send a sister. . . ."

"The chapel. . . ."

"Ah, yes, we cannot save even the tabernacle. The staircase is impassable. . . ."

"But I think Sister Marie may have been praying in the chapel." Thank heavens I had convinced her. Without a word, she made for the lift. "I will check the sisters, except those assisting with the patients who are all outside." She pressed the ground floor button.

Once outside, in the tingling chill of a January night, we had our question answered for us. The yard was full of people; sightseers, sanatorium refugees that smoke or panic had driven from their rooms, the nuns huddled together like a flock of black and white birds disturbed at roosting, and firemen keeping the crowd back from the guest block. One of its corners was sending up a tongue of flame, dimming the full moon against a gentian sky alive with stars. Behind, the snow-peaks stood impressive but as unreal as the backcloth in a play. Just as we got out, someone shouted and pointed. There was a sudden hush.

"You were right," said the Reverend Mother. "We are too late."

Someone had appeared on the roof of the burning block. At first, the flames at the corner confused my view. Then, in front of the moonlit snow, the nun was clearly outlined. I recognized Sister Marie. She carried something, a limp figure across her arms.

The Reverend Mother began to pray.

I remembered the temperamental stand-in who had annoyed Mac, and her little room "near the stars." She must have fainted or been overcome by fumes.

Unless a ladder could be got to them, Sister Marie and the unconscious girl would stand there, frail as feathers against the sky, until the roof collapsed beneath them. If only the upper façade of the sanatorium block had been genuine, Sister Marie could have walked across it to the safety of the nuns' wing opposite. But it was just a thin wall, with the real roof sloping away fifteen feet below on one side, and a sheer drop into the courtyard on the other. All this flashed through my mind in the seconds between the first shocked silence and the hysterical outburst of the crowd. Women screamed, nuns prayed; a fireman on the roof of the nuns' wing shouted unintelligible advice.

Then it happened. At one moment Sister Marie seemed shrinking, shrivelled by the nearness of the flames and the weight of the unconscious girl. The next, she was arrow straight, holding her burden like a balancing pole. She paused a fraction, and then advanced to where the wall stretched out its razor edge to safety. In that pause, that upward motion of the head, that sense of resolution transmitted over the distance that dwarfed her to a puppet against the moon's disc, I guessed her secret. That proud stance, that summoning of nerve, only goes with one class in my business—those who walk the high wire. Once she had lost her nerve, and the crowd had laughed at her. Now . . . but she was still hesitating. Suddenly, I divined what she wanted.

"The lights!" I screamed like a madman. "Give her the lights!" I yelled it up to the nuns' block where I could see the lamps were still fixed from the evening's shooting. After an age, the arc lamp whined and flickered. At last it found the figure on the roof. At that moment I was with her. I felt the limelight's touch, as an experienced artist knows when the lights are on her; I heard the long-drawn-out gasp of the crowd; I sensed the pallid sea of upturned faces. A bit of the roof fell in with a shower of sparks, and Sister Marie started to walk. She passed the hungry tongue of flame at the corner, and stepped out on to the wall. The limelight followed her, turning the parapet to a silver thread. On she stepped, and on, between the stars.

BEFORE she was halfway across, I knew with a curious sense of inevitability that she would make it. No need for me to stay. There would be willing hands which had not touched her secret. Maybe the Reverend Mother had understood a little. Vaguely I heard the crowd cheering as I walked away, back to my room and the childish comfort of blankets. At last I slept, and nobody disturbed me.

It was daylight when I awoke. Someone in my room had disturbed me. A nun stood at the window with her back to me, filling a hypodermic, and I knew, with a kind of triumphant surprise, that it was Sister Marie. Now at last I should see the real woman.

She turned to me: "I am sorry, but the doctor says all patients who were out last night shall have an anti-cold injection." After the first shock, I smiled back ineffectually. Perhaps she sensed my disappointment, for her new serenity became compassionate.

"Thank you for what you did last night." She moved towards me, the syringe gleaming coldly. "But that is finished now, by God's mercy. Turn your arm a little farther, please." By some cruel coincidence, next door the "Posthorn Gallop" came over a radio. Her face did not change, and I knew it never would again. THE END

A BRIDGE BETWEEN

Continued from page 21

drugged, but could not sleep. Richard and Bill. Reynolds. The bridge. Bill and Richard. It was no use counting sheep. . . . Towards morning she fell into a heavy sleep.

The telephone must have been ringing for some time before its racket woke her. It was the doctor.

"Hallo, Susan. It's now eight o'clock. I didn't ring sooner because there was no point. The operation was quite successful. He's sleeping off the effects now, but I think you could see him about ten, or any time after that suits you."

She breathed a fervent "Thank God!" To Doctor Soames she said: "Thank you very much, Doctor. You've been very sweet. I can't tell you how relieved I am."

She jumped out of bed and into a bath. She did something she had not done for years. She sang. It was an old favourite of Richard's.

When day is done, and shadows fall,
I dream of you.
When day is done, I think of all
The joys we knew. . . .

She stopped, surprised to find that she was crying.

SHE was in the garden gathering a few flowers to take to Richard when she heard a step behind her on the gravel. She was astonished to see Reynolds. He was dressed immaculately in white drill and a panama.

"Good morning, Mrs. Wright. I must apologize for intruding." He seemed to have grown another chin since she'd last seen him. It disappeared fleshily into his collar. "I was on my way to the office and thought I would call in to say how sorry I am to hear about your husband."

He paused to tap a bulging briefcase. "I had something very important to see him about today. But it can wait. It can wait."

She led him towards the house. "W—won't you come in? I'm due at the hospital after ten, so I've got about half an hour. Would you care for some coffee?"

He raised his hand in an apologetic gesture. "Thank you very much. I'm afraid I can't stop. But perhaps I may come to the hospital later. Would that be all right?" He spoke quietly and gently, and the fear that Richard had communicated to her began to go.

While they were talking, a black cloud had swept up from the north. Without warning, lightning tore the sky open. The hot rain followed almost at once.

She ran up the path and through the open door. Reynolds followed heavily behind. She turned inside the door to find him on top of her, almost touching. She laughed like a delighted child as she pushed the dripping hair from her face.

"The rains! They're here at last! Isn't it marvellous?" she cried.

He raised his hands as if to hold her. With something of a shock she was aware of the deep loneliness of the man.

She moved across to the bell-push and said with great friendliness: "Coffee, Mr. Reynolds. Change your mind?"

He glanced at his watch. "Thank you. I'd like to, very much. But I have a lot to do. I may see you later at the hospital. Goodbye, Mrs. Wright."

He turned and went down the drive to his car.

As Susan stood and watched him

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go, the telephone rang. She turned to answer it, then stopped. She hesitated for a moment, then went out, shutting the door on its shrill persistent clangour.

THE little Malay orderly led her along the hospital corridor to Richard's ward. The timber floors shone, slippery with polish. But it was the smell she noticed most. A hospital smell. In addition, the hot odour of paint in the tropics and an indefinable tang as though the magnolias in the garden were wafting some of their perfume through the slatted doors.

Richard was propped up in bed, surprisingly bright and cheerful. His face lit up as the orderly pulled aside the bamboo curtain and ushered her in. She sat down beside the bed. There was no need for words. She groped under the sheet for his hand. She noticed that there was no overhead fan; only a small one on the table in the corner. The room was quite cool because of the draught through the slats. The only sound was a dripping tap in the bathroom. Even the cicadas were silent. The sun shone through, weaving a striped pattern on the polished floor.

How long she sat there she did not know. The spell was broken by the orderly's face round the door. "Mr. Reynolds here," he said.

She saw the agitation in Richard's face.

"If you don't want to see him, say so," she said. "Either way, don't worry. He's nothing to be afraid of. I *know*."

Richard gave her hand a squeeze. "I'll see him," he said.

When Reynolds came in, he still had the briefcase in his hand. He tip-toed very quietly and put the case and his hat on the foot of the bed. He put out his hand.

"Glad you look so well, Wright," he said. When he smiled, both his chins went right down into his collar.

Richard said nothing.

"I thought you'd be interested in what I have here," Reynolds went on. "I'll leave it here so that you can go through it at leisure. It's the report on the bridge."

She knew from Richard's face that he was having a pain again. But it didn't last long and his face cleared. "Thank you, sir," he said.

"Before I go, I'd like to say that the Committee made a big point of how clearly and lucidly you gave all the information asked of you. They also added a rider that you were to be congratulated on the way you carried out your duties during the construction of the bridge."

She had not seen Richard so young, so happy, for years.

"They found that the root cause of the trouble was the unreliable quality of this new cement. The tests, purporting to have been done on representative samples in the laboratory, were found to have been most misleading. They were done in a slipshod manner—left, in fact, to the most junior assistant."

Reynolds spoke with feeling. He was angry and bitter. She began to understand. The bridge had been a beautiful thing. He was still speaking, but she was no longer listening. She came to with a start to realize that he was holding out his hand to say goodbye. She noticed it was warm and sticky.

He spoke again from the door. "It's been a sad and disappointing business. This is not the first time that Draper has failed us. But this will be the last, I'll see to that! The man ought to be shot!" With a wave of his hat he was gone.

SHE kissed Richard lightly on the cheek. He was already reading the report before the door closed behind her. Walking slowly along the shiny corridor, she thought: there is no need to worry any more now.

It had been a testing time; perhaps the most crucial period of her life. Not merely because the decision she had had to take would signpost the rest of her life, but because of something bigger, something in a way much more important. In assessing Richard and Bill, she had been assessing herself. And the decision to stay with Richard had been made that morning, in her bath, before she had met Reynolds or known the result of the inquiry. The result had confirmed something she had suddenly instinctively known: not in terms of responsibility for the collapse of the bridge, but in terms of personality.

But that didn't matter really. It wasn't a matter of who was strong and who was weak. What mattered was that she was Richard's wife, and that he loved her, and needed her. And, she knew now, she loved and needed him. She could never have left him.

She climbed into the car and pressed the starter. The car bumped gently along the gravel track. The rain had left a cool and earthy smell beneath the trees. THE END

"Come along, Mabel, let's go. I can't waste my time with a doctor who says there's nothing wrong with me"

NOW YOU KNOW

HOW to keep house plants watered when you go on holiday is a problem. If you have no neighbour to help, then the simplest way is to bury the pots in a shady part of the garden and water well.

Another method is to place the plant pot into a larger pot and pack the gap with wet peat or other fibrous substance.

Yet another dodge is to fill a bucket with water and place it on a stool with the plants grouped around it below. Next, loosely plait several strands of wool together—one plait for each plant. One end of the wool is then immersed weighted in the water; the other end led over and placed into the plant soil. Like a wick, the wool will water the plants automatically.

VENETIAN BIRD

Continued from page 18

the door open to make it look as though I'd just rushed in."

"You should have opened it afterwards."

"We could do it now." Longo nodded at the revolver which the count had taken from Minelli and which he still held.

The count shrugged his shoulders and moved towards the desk.

"After all those people have seen him lying here helpless? When there are two of us, one armed and the other able to take his rifle? No, Longo—the police must do what you bungled. We shall have a little time before they come. I want you to listen carefully. . . ."

MERCER had asked for a drink and someone, Minelli, he thought, had brought him brandy. The telephone on the desk began to ring. He saw Spadoni pick it up.

Mercer turned his head stiffly. Count Boria was standing by the fireplace. Beyond him, half-seated, half-standing against a gilt and painted *cassone*, was Longo.

He raised the glass and drank the brandy at a gulp. Minelli came from the window and, taking the glass, put it on the desk and then went over to stand by the door.

Spadoni put the receiver down and leaned back in his chair. "Through both lungs. They think it's only a matter of hours."

He went to the window and looked out at the great spawn of boats which spread across the canal from the palace. There was no open anger now, no shouting, only a quiet murmur and a disturbing stillness of bodies. They were waiting.

"When he dies," he said slowly, "the lid of the pot will go flying."

"When who dies?" Mercer heard his own voice, thick and uncertain.

Spadoni looked at him, but said nothing. Disgust and contempt marked the large loose face. He went back to the desk and sat down.

The count said suddenly, "This man ought to be taken away now. There's a crowd in the campo. They might break in here."

Spadoni shook his head. "If I tried to take him out now they'd tear him apart. I've sent for more men. When our launches have cleared the canal, we'll take him."

Mercer stood up and he could see how the movement alerted them, brought out the quiescent hatred in them.

"If you're talking about me, I'd like to know what I'm supposed to have done."

"Sit down!"

But Mercer ignored Spadoni. He shook with a spasm of anger. "But I want to know. Who's dead?"

Longo came forward a step. "As though you didn't know who's dead. You dirty swine——"

"Longo!" The count put out a hand to him and the man dropped back. Then he looked across at Mercer. "You may have no feelings about Nervi's death. Please spare us by discontinuing this pretended ignorance."

"Nervi——" So that was it. He looked around at them. They watched him as though he were a dangerous beast, and he was filled with a sickening sense of being trapped.

Spadoni began to speak, his voice formal now, driving out all emotion. "While we're waiting, I want to get things straight. Luigi?"

Luigi, standing by the door, nodded, sucked the end of his pencil and settled his notebook on his knee.

"Tenente Longo—you were first here?"

"Yes."

"Full name?"

"Marcello Longo. *Tenente di vascello*, corvette *Medea*. She's tied up at the Dogana."

"How did you come to be in the palace?"

"When we're in Venice, I rent a room in the basement from Minelli. Most of the officers rent rooms for leave. . . ."

"All right. What happened?"

"Count Boria invited me to watch the procession from the palace front. I didn't know any of the other guests and felt a bit uncomfortable there. Also, I thought I could get a better view from the first floor, so I came up here. I was sitting at one of the windows on the stairhead, watching the procession. When Nervi's barge was opposite the palace I heard a shot and saw him go down. The shot came from this room and I ran in. This man—" he nodded towards Mercer, "—was coming away from the window with a rifle in his hands. He saw me and raised the rifle. I hadn't time to get my own revolver. I hit him and he went down. I think his head must have struck the chair. Anyway, he was out, but I drew my revolver just in case."

As Mercer listened, each word dropped into him like an ice-cold stone. His mind was clear now and he was aware of the tangle of deceit into which he had been drawn. This was how they were going to get rid of him. Anger rose from his desperation.

"The man's a liar!"

Spadoni grunted, ran his fingers through his hair and turned his pouch-weighted eyes on Mercer. "Your turn will come. Until then

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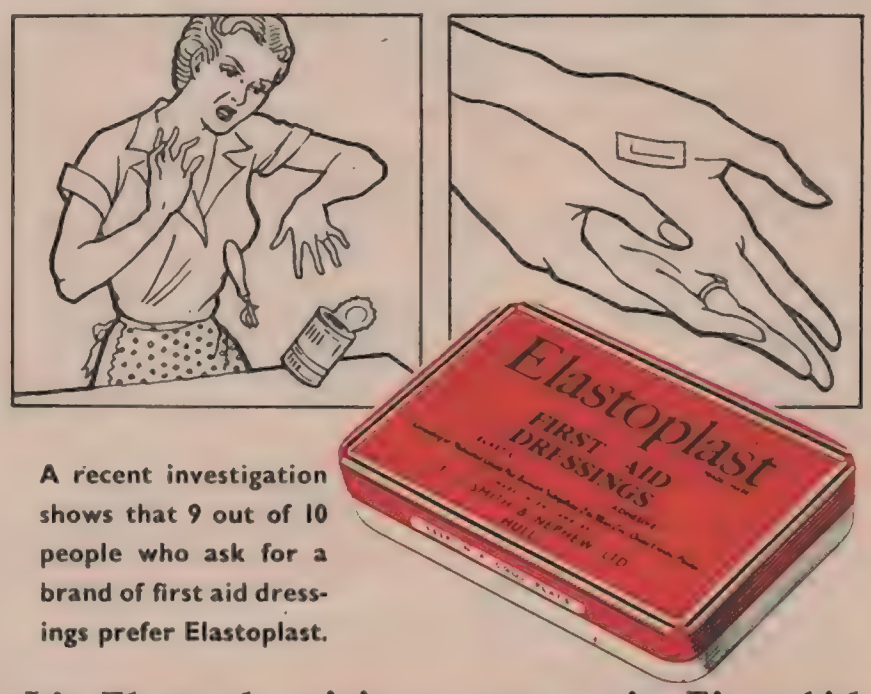

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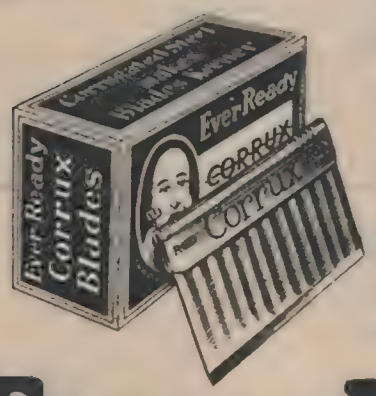

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be silent!" Contempt was in the words and Mercer knew that there was no help for him in this room except from himself.

"As I stood over him," Longo went on, "the girl Ninetta came into the room with her dog. I pushed her towards the door, and as I reached it, Minelli came in. He took the revolver from me. A few seconds later, Count Boria arrived with some of the guests. The count got rid of them and Minelli, and then telephoned the police."

"Thank you." Spadoni rolled the end of his tie between his fingers and bent his shoulders forward over the desk. "Minelli."

Mercer listened as Minelli, embarrassed and troubled at the part he was forced to play, told his story. Whatever happened, he must keep his head.

When Minelli had finished, Spadoni stood up. "Have any of you ever seen this man before today?" He nodded towards Mercer and looked around at them.

The count said: "He's visited the Gallery once or twice, just as other people do, and a little while back Longo, Minelli and I found him here late at night in very suspicious circumstances. At the time I accepted his story that he had fallen asleep here. Now. . . ."

"That's very interesting." Spadoni reached into his pocket and pulled out a packet of cigarettes. He lit one and through the smoke looked at Mercer. Then very deliberately he flipped a cigarette across to him. "Now *you* can talk."

THE cigarette fell at Mercer's feet, and for a moment he wanted to let it lie there. The movement of the large hand had been an insult, the gesture according him no humanity. But desire for a smoke was too great. He picked it up and lit it.

"I didn't shoot Nervi. Why should I? He was only a name to me."

Spadoni shrugged his shoulders and lifted an envelope from the desk. "You must do better than that." He tipped the envelope and clean thousand-lire notes slid from it. "One hundred thousand, signor. And perhaps more waiting for you. I myself took the envelope out of your pocket. I think that answers 'Why should I?' Your price has probably gone down since 1938."

Mercer stood up angrily and he saw the movement of the men in the room, the half-step, the sudden turn of a shoulder, the jerk of muscles being tensed, but Spadoni shook his head at them. "Let him move about if he wants to. I don't think Signor Mercer's going to be foolish." His broad hand patted Longo's revolver which lay on the desk. "Let's have your story, signor. Begin where you like, but don't be surprised if I interrupt you now and again."

Mercer sat on the arm of the chair, forcing anger from him. He wouldn't do himself any good by going off the deep end. He had to talk convincingly.

"Nervi was shot either by Longo or a man called Gian Uccello. I can't tell you which because while it was all going on I was lying unconscious on the floor here."

Spadoni lifted a hand and frowned. "About Uccello. I shall be interested to hear how a man who—on your own evidence—is buried at Mirave came to be in this room today."

"He's not dead. That's the whole trouble. I came to Venice looking for Uccello. A man who worked in this place offered to give me some information, but he was murdered before he could talk."

"You're talking about Grandini?"

"His real name was Boldesca. He was a porter here."

"You told me another name, but not that he worked here."

"At the time I wasn't in the mood to help you, any more than you're in the mood to help me now."

The count stirred by the fireplace. "It might help this confusion of names if I said that I received a letter from Milan two days ago from Boldesca."

Spadoni nodded. "Go on, Signor Mercer. You came to find Gian Uccello and you finally found him, buried at Mirave."

"I got that from his wife—Signorina Medova who works in this place. That's what I was to believe, that he was buried at Mirave. But he's still alive. He was a stonemason's assistant at Mirave and worked off his papers on an unknown body after an air raid. Paolo Cerva he called himself, and the Germans took him off when they retreated from Mirave and he was never seen again. But on the night I was found in this place, I heard him talking in this room. I was here to take another look at a tapestry design being made here—the design is the same as one done by Uccello. I got more and more interested in Uccello and began to poke my nose into things and then someone—Count Boria—began to be worried by my insistence. . . ."

HE was talking quickly now, as though in speed there was some potency which would carry Spadoni with him. . . . "First they tried to buy me off, and then they tried to beat me off, and finally, when I got too close, they worked this on me. Out at the Orfeo glassworks, I overhead the count and Longo and an army colonel discussing the details of Nervi's assassination. They want to stir up trouble in Italy so that the army and navy hotheads can walk in and take the country over. I tried to get away, but I was knocked out and kept somewhere in this palace until today. An hour ago Longo came to me and knocked me out again. When I came to, all of you were in the room looking at me as though I were something that smelt too high!"

He sat back, breathing heavily, and there was silence in the room.

Spadoni sat very still, his eyes on

THE HUMAN MACHINE

An even temper

AS they grow older and, presumably, wiser, sensible people school themselves more and more to suppress their personal feelings for the sake of others. Emotions, even violent ones, come unbidden: but you can master them. To be their slave is pitiful.

An equable temperament and an even temper are precious possessions—but open to anyone who will endure the necessary self-discipline. We should all try. Uncontrolled emotions can be as dangerous as an atom bomb.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

WHICH IS YOUR TYPE OF HAIR?

1 Hair growing vigorously, but spotted with dandruff. Trouble ahead. See A below.

2 Hair receding at temples. Advanced dandruff has begun to affect the hair roots. See A.

3 Plenty of hair, but in poor condition. May degenerate into type shown in 4. See paragraph B.

4 The typical limp, lifeless hair of a greasy scalp. This hair needs immediate attention. See B.

5 A patch of thinning hair. The only answer is: feed the hair roots. See paragraph C

6 Another case of thinning hair. The site may vary, but the need is the same. See C.

7 Result of long neglect of the hair. This man ignored many warning signs. See C.

You may lose

HAIR HEALTH

if you ignore these warning signs

HAIR health cannot be left to chance. To enjoy a handsome head of hair—and to enjoy it for a lifetime—you need a simple, but sensible hair routine, and the ability to understand and correct unhealthy hair conditions.

This article gives practical advice about several common, but distressing hair troubles which, allowed to go unchecked, will undermine your hair health.

In every case the danger is a stoppage in the normal supply of hair-forming substances to the hair roots. This leads inevitably to falling hair—unless the roots are nourished directly, from outside. For this purpose scientists have evolved a blend of the *natural* amino-acids vital for hair health. They have called this organic solution *Silvikrin*.

The photographs above illustrate typical hair conditions which need Silvikrin; full details and methods of use are given below.

CONDITION and PRESCRIPTION

A DANDRUFF

(*Pityriasis sicca*) The most unsightly of all common hair troubles. Unfortunately dandruff is highly contagious. A yeast-like organism is always present, and there is much evidence that it is responsible for the disease. An inflammatory process is set up in the scalp which, if allowed to continue, results in extensive thinning of the hair.

The need for treatment is urgent, for dandruff scales soon begin to clog the pores of the scalp. The scalp becomes hard, choking the delicate blood vessels which nourish the hair roots. The hair begins to die from starvation. Action is needed.

Shampoo your hair weekly with a Silvikrin shampoo. Massage the scalp, for at least two minutes night and morning, with Silvikrin Lotion with Oil. It will tone up the scalp, feed the hair roots and supply the natural oils which dry hair needs.

B GREASY SCALP

(*Seborrhoea oleosa*) Lank and over-oily hair is the first warning. The sebaceous glands are producing an abnormal amount of greasy matter. This soon forms a grey deposit on the scalp which blocks up the follicles out of which the hair grows. Finally, the hair root itself is affected—starved of the organic substances vital for hair health.

In all cases of this type diet can be a help: cut down on all starchy foods. But Silvikrin, because of its special nutritional property, offers the most direct, most speedy and most simple treatment.

Keep your hair fresh and clean by using a Silvikrin shampoo at least once a week. Choice of Silvikrin is genuinely important, because its special quality prevents the harmful effects that sometimes follow the too frequent use of an inferior shampoo. Massage (two minutes night and morning) with Silvikrin Hair Tonic Lotion—it will tone up the scalp and feed the hair roots.

C THINNING HAIR

Yes, a grim situation—but by no means a hopeless one. Let us face it logically. **1** The *basic* cause is a lack of the hair's natural food. **2** That food must be supplied *from outside*, to stimulate the hair mechanism back to health again. **3** For this *fundamental* purpose, Silvikrin is quite indispensable. It is a blend of no less than 14 vital amino-acids—the *natural* substances essential for healthy hair. **4** Bad teeth, infected tonsils or some other septic focus can gravely affect your hair. Check these with your doctor or dentist. Then, with every confidence, give Pure Silvikrin a patient and reasonable trial.

Probably you have neglected your hair for many years—so that it may take some time to restore it to health. You will never regret your decision to use Pure Silvikrin.

1 Slight cases. *Silvikrin Lotion with Oil should be massaged into the scalp morning and night. If your scalp is rather too oily, use Silvikrin Hair Tonic Lotion.*

2 Bad cases. *Apply Pure Silvikrin night and morning with the addition of a little Silvikrin Lotion with Oil if the hair is dry.*

3 In patches. *Apply Pure Silvikrin to the spot where thinning occurs. Then massage the whole scalp with Silvikrin Lotion with Oil or Silvikrin Hair Tonic Lotion. Apply this treatment night and morning.*

Healthy hair but . . .

Perhaps you already have healthy hair. You keep it clean and well-groomed. You see no reason why you should do anything more. Nor do we. But we say again: prevention is better than cure: under the conditions of modern life *nobody's* hair health can be taken for granted. And Silvikrin is the perfect safeguard. So we suggest this simple rule: when you shampoo, use a Silvikrin shampoo. When you groom your hair, use a Silvikrin dressing (either Silvifix or Silvikrin Lotion with Oil). For all Silvikrin products contain *Pure Silvikrin*. You take no more trouble—but you do take a sensible and pleasant precaution.

THE SILVIKRIN RANGE

for hair health that lasts a lifetime

Pure Silvikrin—12/6

Silvikrin Lotion with Oil and Silvikrin Hair Tonic Lotion } 2/9, and 4/10 (for large economy size)

Silvifix Hair Cream—4/6

Silvikrin Soapless Shampoo—8d.

Silvikrin Liquid Shampoo—1/6

from all chemists and hairdressers

Silvikrin

THE HAIR'S NATURAL FOOD

SP-11

This England . . .

Near Lewes, Sussex

MUCH DO WE OWE to the Great Horse of England, and Henry VIII was at one time much concerned for its due maintenance. Wherefore his Bill for the Breed of Horses begins: "For as much as the breed and generation of good and strong horses within this realm extendeth not only to a great help and defence of the same but is also a great commodity and profit to the inhabitants . . ." The clauses enact that all forests, chases and commons be "driven" within fifteen days of Michaelmas and all colts unpromising, and horses not being of the "height of fifteen handfulls," be destroyed. Ruthless, but it gave us the handsome "Shire" of to-day — 2,000 lbs. of docile, intelligent strength. And who but those same men fostered those great beers of England, your Bass and Worthington — also strong yet docile, bred to aid us royally through the labours of the day.

ISSUED BY BASS AND WORTHINGTON, BURTON-UPON-TRENT, ENGLAND

the loose lire notes in front of him.

"You're suggesting, signor, that Count Boria and others were to use Uccello for this assassination and, when your strictly professional interest in him became too close, they framed you for a crime which, in fact, he did?"

"Yes, it's obvious."

Spadoni rose. "I don't know that it's obvious, but it's certainly ingenious. I must congratulate you on being a quick thinker."

"Damn you, I'm not lying!" He was on his feet, anger springing from the hopelessness which struck him in Spadoni's words.

"Sit down, Signor Mercer, and be calm. I assure you it will impress me more." He turned to the count.

"Count Boria, I think one or two points have been raised which you might like to comment on."

"Thank you. Perhaps I may speak for other people as well as myself?" His voice was assured, the tiredness long lost now to the necessity of meeting a threat.

"Gian Uccello," he said, "is a name well known to me. He was born on my estate near Potenza. When she was very young, he married Signorina Medova, a woman for whose talents I have the highest respect. After he took up a life of crime, she had no more to do with him. I brought her to Venice just before the war, to work here, and she assumed her maiden name. She learned of Uccello's death at Mirave through a stonemason's assistant there. I forget his name, but no doubt it was Paolo Cerva. He came to see her once and because he knew she worked for me, he brought with him some designs he had done. I purchased one. Incidentally, it's a very fine design and had he not been taken off by the Germans I might eventually have employed him. . . . The rest of this man's story is nonsense. I have neither tried to buy nor beat him off. The Orfeo glassworks belong to me but I have not been there for two weeks. You are welcome to question my employees. Longo I know simply as a lodger of Minelli's with whom I pass a word occasionally. And quite frankly, though I respect Nervi more highly as a poet than a politician, I should be a stupid man—if I wished to assassinate him—to arrange for it to be done from my own palace."

Mercer was on his feet. "You know that shooting Nervi from this place doesn't affect you a damn! It's practically a public building. Anyone could get in here to do it!"

"That's obvious. You got in here."

MERCER turned angrily to Spadoni. "Can't you see the truth that's right under your nose? They're framing me. Uccello shot Nervi."

Spadoni ran his fingers through his hair. "Uccello's dead, signor."

"No he's not. Get hold of Signorina Medova and ask her. She admitted to me herself that he was alive and in Venice and that Count Boria was going to help him leave the country."

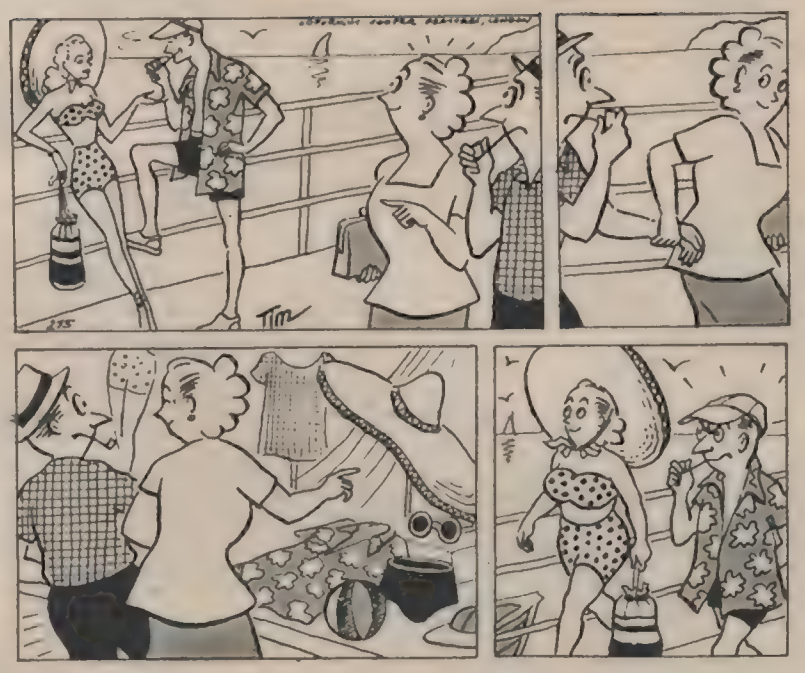
Spadoni was silent for a moment, his eyes on Mercer. Then he jerked his head towards the count.

Count Boria raised his hands in a weary gesture of hopelessness. "The man has the most fantastic imagination. It's not true, of course. But I suggest that you send for Signorina Medova and ask her."

Spadoni grunted. "I'm not sending for anyone at the moment." He came back to the desk. "All right. I'd like to talk to Signor Mercer alone. Luigi, you stay."

He went to the door and held it

OH, JOHNNY! *by TIM*



open. As he did so, and as the other men went out of the room, Mercer had a glimpse of two armed carabinieri standing outside. Spadoni closed the door and came back. Without looking at Mercer, and keeping his eyes on the design of the carpet, he began to talk.

"It's ingenious, but it won't hold water. If it came to a trial it would all be knocked from under you."

"You don't believe me?"

FOR the first time, a touch of anger showed in Spadoni. "For your own sake, stop being stupid! In front of the others you had to put up a show. But not with me. Of course I don't believe you. I'm not even thinking about you. That's what's worrying me—*that*, out there!" He shook a hand vigorously towards the window. "All hell's going to be let loose unless something's done quickly. And you know it."

"Of course I know it—but I'm not responsible for it."

Spadoni flopped down into the desk chair and gave Luigi a despairing look.

"Signor Mercer—I'm not a child who believes in fairy stories. You're caught here in this room, wearing gloves and with a hot rifle. You're a professional agent. You've been mixed up in an assassination in this country before. All your life you've made a living on the dark side of the fence. You're hard up. Times are bad. You come to Venice on what I'll grant may have been a legitimate job. You run into the end of it and your expense account goes bang and you've only a few lire between you and the next job. Why didn't you go back to Paris? Because you found another job here. You've been keeping company with men like Gufo and Moretto. Two days ago you leave Venice openly. Today you're back—but in between you were hiding somewhere. *Corpo di Bacco*—what do you take me for?"

"I know it looks like hell. But I didn't do it. It was Uccello. He's alive, I tell you."

Spadoni shook his head. "I don't care whether he's alive or dead. I don't care whether you live or die. That's all I care about——" His fingers stabbed viciously towards the window. Then his hand dropped with a bang to the desk and in a changed voice, calm, unctuous, he went on, "But you care whether you live or die—and a life sentence on one of our islands is death. Now listen, you tell me the truth, give me a lead to the people behind this, the men who want that trouble to boil up out there. . . . Give me anything so that I can tell our people where to watch, where to keep a tight or loose hand, and I'll do a deal with you. When Nervi dies, the Government will have about two days to act, and they can only pull it off if they know exactly where the danger is. You can tell us that, or help us to it, and I'll see that you don't lose by it."

Mercer dropped his head into his hands. He would have to think of something. There must be some way. . . . He remembered the count, straining desperately in his mind to find some loophole in his story. But Boria was an old man and a clever man.

Unbidden, he had a sudden vision of Count Boria, handing him a drink that evening when he had been knocked out in the gallery. Boria had brought him into this room, and let him out by his own door, the secret door in the panelling. The secret door in the panelling!

HE got to his feet and began to walk slowly across the room. The door opened by pressure on one of the rosettes. . . . The policemen watched him, Spadoni for a time taking hope in his silence. Without turning, his eyes on the chamfered panelling of the wall, Mercer said quietly, "I've helped you already. I've told you—Count Boria knows what it's all about. Make him talk, or get hold of Uccello——"

"Uccello!" Spadoni gave a gusty sigh of exasperation. "The man's dead and you know it. I'm tired of fiction. Listen, Mercer, I'm offering you a chance. Give me the truth and I'll do all I can for you. In this room we can be frank. There's no question of loyalty or good faith between you and whoever you worked for. Cash and your personal safety—that's all you need to think about. Be sensible and make the best of a bad job. . . ."

Mercer turned and leaned against the wall panelling, his hands behind him moving slowly over the wooden rosettes.

"You're right about me, Spadoni," he said evenly, but his body was stirring now to the rising beat of blood and the hammering of his nerves. "Cash and my own personal safety mean everything to me. If I could do a deal with you I would. Doesn't that prove I'm telling the truth?"

"No." Spadoni stood up and took the revolver into his hands, his eyes on it as he weighed it gently. "It means the deal you've done with the others is a better one. I'm not wasting any more time. By midnight I'll have you talking—out of a nightmare which won't let up until you've said everything."

Mercer felt the wooden rosette give under his fingers and, his back against the panelled door, held the weight of wood from moving inwards. He said: "The man who needs that treatment is Uccello."

"He's dead!"

"But if he were alive?"

"Then I might believe your story. In fact, I'd take a chance on it. I'd make Boria talk. The whole country would know the truth and there wouldn't be a chance of success for whoever's behind all this." Spadoni stepped forward angrily. "Give me names, man. Names of the people in Rome to jump on—anything, and I'll make it worth your while!"

"Only Boria or, maybe, Uccello, can do that."

"Uccello!". Spadoni spat the word from him, and then span round. "Luigi—call the men in. We're wasting time with this assassin——"

As he spoke, Mercer slid aside and the door opened. He twisted through it and pulled it after him, his hands reaching for the bolt. He heard Spadoni shout. The bolt went over with a dry, screeching sound and he flung himself aside. The wooden panelling splintered as three revolver shots tore through it, and then he was racing down the narrow, twisting stairs. He went down the steps three at a time. At the last turn, twelve steps below him, he saw a carabiniere framed in a great patch of sunlight from the pillared vestibule. The man looked up at him, his face relaxed with surprise, and then his hand dropped for the revolver at his hip.

Mercer jumped the last six steps, saw the sallow face, the drab olive mass of body, and the tugging hand at the holster race up to him. His feet struck the man on the chest and they went down in a heap, the full weight of Mercer's body crashing on to him. The man's head smacked against the paved floor and, as Mercer rose, he lay still.

He raced across the vestibule and out into the narrow walled garden. A small doorway in the wall, he knew, led out on to the quayside. He brushed himself with his hands and tidied his clothes.

Listening for the first sounds from the stairway, he walked to the door and slipped quietly through. On the quayside was a thin sprinkling of people, watching the palace with a quiet, sullen concentration. Mercer felt their eyes on him. A man reached out for his arm, holding him for a moment. It was a carabiniere stationed at the door to keep the crowd out.

"What's happening in there, signor?"

Mercer smiled, shaking his head. "Don't ask me. I'm a journalist—they won't tell me anything."

A woman in the crowd shouted, "Why don't they bring the swine out?" The crowd stirred, a corporate movement of animosity.

He pushed through them and they let him go, their eyes turning back to the palace. He went up the quayside, keeping his pace deliberate, waiting each moment for the hue and cry to break out behind him. Walking without haste, a control which tortured every step with the mad impulse to run, he turned off the quayside up a side street.

He swung away through an under

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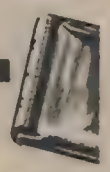

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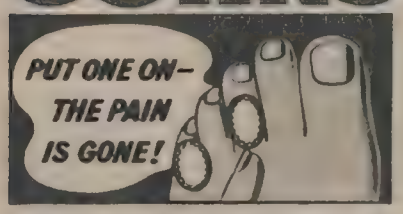

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Moody Meteorologist gets a 'regular' change of outlook

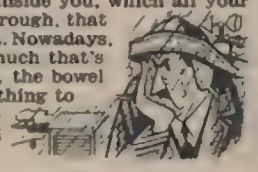
TRUST Bliggins for the blackest weather-reports. They call him "Big Chief Rain-in-your-Face." "Wotcher, weathercock," I hailed him. "How is life on the Air Ministry's roof?"

"*10/10ths overcast,*" *snarled Bliggins.* "*And don't talk about the weather when I'm feeling under it. If you're constipated like I am, an isobar looks like a length of lead piping—*"

"*Dead* piping," I put in, "*that's* your trouble."

"*But—*" *quibbled Bliggins.*

"I know, I know," I said. "But it's the 30 feet of piping inside you, which all your food has to go through, that I'm talking about. Nowadays, when we eat so much that's soft and starchy, the bowel muscles have nothing to get hold of, nothing to pull and push."



"*What's that to me?*" *asked Bliggins.*

"A trough of *no* pressure," I said, "and that means constipation, and a depression. What you need is *bulk*—in words of one syllable, All-Bran."

"*That's not a medicine, that's a breakfast-food,*" *said Bliggins.*

"Right," I said, "and it's delicious! But a little All-Bran every day adds enough *bulk* to your diet to keep those muscles functioning properly. It'll make you 'regular' in a few days."

"*It'd better,*" *snapped Bliggins.*

When I saw him next, Bliggins looked like the proud father of a son. "Well, well," I said, "*what* a change in the weather. What happened?"

"*All-Bran did it,*" *chuckled Bliggins.* "*It made me 'regular' in about four days!*"

"Further outlook settled," I said.

KELLOGG'S ALL-BRAN relieves constipation, keeps you "regular." Made from rich outer layers of whole wheat, deliciously oven-toasted with salt, malt, and sugar. Makes a splendid breakfast, and many appetizing cakes, buns, and surprise dishes. From all grocers.

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These practical and attractive shoes in brown calf have given yeoman service for years, and they're still as smart as new! The secret?—Goodyear Stick-on-Soles and heels. They keep shoes neat and trim far longer. And their rubber is specially compounded to produce thin, light-weight soles that give weeks more wear. So you pay for fewer repairs, while your shoes *look* smart and *stay* smart.

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For ACIDITY and HEARTBURN

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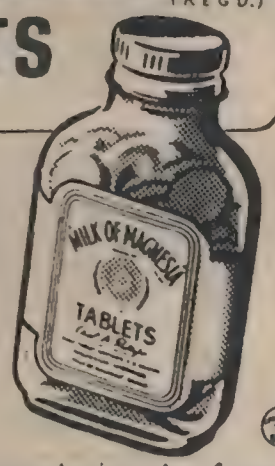
'MILK of MAGNESIA' (REG'D.) TABLETS



By correcting acidity they give prompt relief from heartburn, flatulence and all other forms of acid indigestion.

★ 'Milk of Magnesia' Tablets are handy to carry in handbag or pocket.

★ *'Milk of Magnesia' is the trade mark of Phillips' preparation of magnesia*

passage and in a few moments was lost among the Sunday evening crowd which moved restlessly towards the palace. No one knew him, no one had any interest in him. In an hour things would be different. Then, he knew, he would not be able to go five yards in daylight without being picked up.

He worked away right-handed behind the Piazza San Marco, heading for the only refuge he knew.

THE sitting-room was empty. He went up to Rosa's bedroom and pushed the door open. She was leaning over a wall basin washing her hair. The top of her slip had dropped to her waist and the spread of her great shoulders was splotched with crisp soap froth. She turned, peering at him through a wet trellis of hair, and the water ran from her breasts in hasty globules, like rain from the backs of storm-passive sows.

"Most people knock, dear boy." She raised her head, flicking the hair back in a noisy whip that drew a fan of dark water marks across the wall.

"Most people have time to knock."

She picked up a towel, wiped herself, then twisted it round her head in a turban. Drawing up her slip, she pointed to the bed. He brought her a yellow, peacock-spread peignoir.

"In five minutes the police will be here, asking if you've seen me."

"They've a habit of repeating themselves. They were here asking the same thing last night. Anyway . . ." she paused, "Bernardo phoned a little while back. He thought you might come here. He keeps his ear to the ground pretty well."

"Well?" He thought she was going to fail him. She was biting her lip and the fat, puffed face suddenly had a stern, accusing expression which increased his sense of isolation.

"I liked Nervi's poetry and his politics. If you shot him, I'll give you five minutes' grace before I phone for Spadoni."

"For God's sake, Rosa—don't *you* start believing that."

"I'm not starting to believe anything. I'm asking a question. Yes or no?"

"No. I didn't shoot him. I was framed. But anyway, I can make it on my own." He turned towards the door. The shock was like that of a child who runs to a mother for help and is met by a buffet.

He had his hand on the door when she spoke. "All right, dear boy—there's no need for heroics."

She came over, and it was Rosa now, the old Rosa, smiling, comfortable and assured. She put up a hand that was hung with heavy trails of soap perfume and patted his face. "You didn't shoot him, but you've dug yourself a hole as deep as any man ever did. Come on."

She opened the door and he followed her.

They went up the stairs to the room where he sheltered before. She locked the door behind her and then crossed to the clothes cupboard against the far wall. She opened the door and drew the clothes back from the centre rod and then reached up and twisted one of the hooks fastened to the rear panelling. The back of the cupboard slid away. Seeing his eyes on her, she laughed quietly.

"During the war, quite a percentage of the population of Venice lived on the rooftops. It was a habit that used to annoy the Germans."

He climbed through and then reached back to help her. They were

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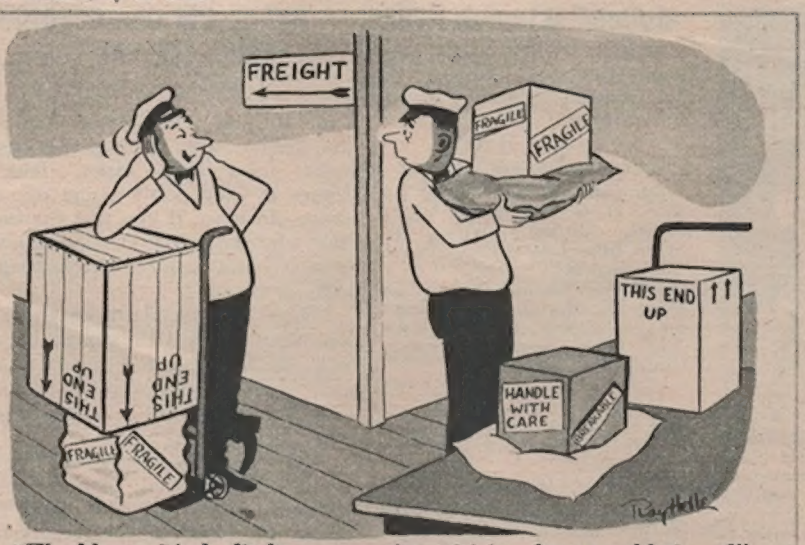

"Would you mind a little constructive criticism from an old-timer?"

directly under the roof, a jagged stippling of light seeping in between the old tiles. He went forward, bowing his head, feeling the crunch of loose plaster under his feet. After a few yards, the roof space broadened into an angled recess made by the upthrust of a chimney stack. Against the stack was a mattress.

"This will have to do until we make other arrangements. Don't smoke, and don't move about more than you have to. Have you a watch?"

"Yes."

"If you hear anyone coming up here before midnight, go out of the skylight. What you do then depends on the time you have." She put her hand on a sloping wooden skylight in the roof. "You can jump for the canal. That's a hundred-foot drop, or you can go along the roof to the next skylight and down. It's a carpenter's and undertaker's place. There won't be anyone there until tomorrow morning."

He held her arm for a moment. "I should have taken your advice long ago—and cleared out."

"You don't have to make any pretty speeches, dear boy." She put her hand on his shoulder and pushed him towards the mattress. "I'll do what I can for you. I'll be up here at midnight with some food and a bottle of wine."

MERCER lay in the darkness, hearing the clocks labour through the hours to midnight, sorting out the disorder of his mind, keeping apprehension held down, and wondering what he should do.

It was just after one when Rosa came. He heard the door swing at the end of the roof and then the soft stir of her breath as she came through the darkness towards him. A bottle of wine was pushed against his hands as he sat up.

"Eat and drink while I talk." He heard her settle at the end of the mattress, and the creak of her large body, the scent of her in the gloom was comforting. He drank.

"There's cold ham and tomatoes. Ideal food for garret picnics. I had to smuggle them up in my blouse, so don't complain if the tomatoes are a little warm. There's a carabiniere in the hallway killing time and my weekend business."

"What's happened outside?"

"Nothing much yet. A radio announcement of the shooting and a description of you, and a demonstration in the Piazza San Marco because the police let you get away. Someone threw a brick through the window of the Spanish Consulate. They thought it was British. The balloon will go up when he dies."

"He's still alive?"

"Yes. They're giving him blood transfusions. You can tell from the bulletins on the radio what they're expecting. You're in a mess, dear boy."

"I've got to get my hands on Uccello. He did it."

"You've got to get out of this country and go to earth for a few years. You know that."

"Maybe."

"No maybe about it. Forget Uccello. Just write *finito* under the name Mercer, and hope that we can work something for you. I've spoken to Bernardo—got him down here as my lawyer to protest about the gorilla in the hallway. It's strained him a lot but he's going to help. Tomorrow morning you move out of here on an underground ticket."

He said nothing, and she said, a little testily: "Forget Uccello and any other bee you may have in your bonnet. Now eat and drink up. I've got to get back in case our friend takes it into his mind to have a stroll round the bedrooms."

When he had finished, she handed him a packet of cigarettes and matches. "Be careful with them."

In the darkness she pulled at one of his ears affectionately. "I was offered a hundred thousand lire for you tonight, dear boy."

"You should have taken it. In the open market I'd be lucky to go ten." He stood up and put his arm around her.

She gave a contented little grunt. "You're one of the stupid ones who should have stayed at home."

"I'm not complaining, and I won't forget you."

"Gratitude is about all I ever get from my men. Send me a picture postcard when you get to the end of the line." He felt her hand against his pocket, and then she moved away from him and indicated the boarded skylight. "If you hear someone tap on that three times, don't be alarmed. It'll be the undertaker."

"For me?"

"Yes. Open up for him and do as he says. Don't argue. His name's Tallius and he deals in contraband as well as corpses. Goodbye, dear boy, and don't forget the postcard." Her hand reached out to his cheek, touching him softly and then she was gone.

He put his hand into his pocket and pulled out the revolver she had left there. It was heavy and cold against his palm.

To be concluded next week

Schweppes Sparkling Orange

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—or with a kindred spirit

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VP wine

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VP THREE STAR ★★★ WINES 9/6 A Bottle

HER HEART STOOD STILL

"I'M sure my heart missed a beat when that £500 telegram came!" declared Mrs. L. Brearley, our 1,782nd First Prize-winner, the *sixth* woman this year to head the winning list. With her big cheque came a refrigerator. "I'm delighted with both," she told JOHN BULL.

Heading this week's 2,070 prizes is another £500 cheque. And with this, as well as with the other chief prizes, goes a new 3-in-1 Holiday Award—fares to the seaside, a week's hotel accommodation for two *and* an Ensign camera. Let *Bullets* pay for *your* holiday!

NEW 3-in-1 HOLIDAY PRIZES for "BULLETS"

£500 1st PRIZE CASH PLUS 3-in-1 HOLIDAY AWARD

£50, £25, each plus 3-in-1 HOLIDAY AWARD

Holiday winner and chosen companion provided with luxurious hotel accommodation, arranged by Cook's, at favourite seaside resort in Britain for any week in 1951 or 1952. Bills and rail fares paid—and winner receives also an Ensign camera. (Cash in lieu if winner unable to accept Holiday Award.)

2 of £10, 5 of £5, 10 of £2.10s.

50 of 10s., 2,000 "Good Shots"

"Sunday Feast" Bonuses

Whole Roast Chicken and 2 lb. delicious Ham (both tinned) accompany each of the 20 chief prizes won with *Bullet* which was one of four or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, dated August 18, and in JOHN BULL, dated August 25, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

Next Week—Final "Bullets"

SEASIDE HOLIDAYS

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Civilization's Champion
Horror Of Tomorrow
Dictator Austerity
Where We've Failed
The Humble
It May Never Happen, But
She's Decided
Parting Of The Ways
Unhealthy Spot
Act Of A Madman
Hotly Debated
Not In The Union
Chap With A Camera
All Shapes And Sizes
Squashed
Whale Of A Time
Uncle Ebenezer
Like A Hunted Animal
Stopped, Looked And
At The Ship's Concert

Incomplete "Examples"—see instructions

Home Without .....
.....Of Our Time
Wondering What To.....
Littered With.....
"Couldn't You.....It?"
.....For The Neighbours

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "Combined," top left-hand corner.

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 1,793 (or Xword 745), "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

Amongst the regular weekly readers of "*Bullets*" *Bulletin* is £500 winner Mrs. L. Brearley, 40 Innerbrook Road, Chelston, Torquay. "It's a real companion help," she says.

That coupon below can bring its practical hints to *you* every Thursday.

Continued from next column

WALL—OF DEATH, STALIN'S "SIDESHOW." £5: Mrs. M. J. Hale, 130 Ruspidge Road, Cinderford, Glos: UP AND DOWN THE STREET—"THEY'RE WALKING OUT!" *Ran.*

For ten winners of £4 see "*Bullets*" *Bulletin.*

50 Prizes of £1 and 2,000 "Good Shot" Prizes have also been posted.

"Bullets" Winners 1,788

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Swiss Holiday for Two: A. D. MacDougall, 19 Audley Road, Folkestone:

CHINA'S BOLT SHOT, SO "DOOR" *Open?*

£50 plus Seaside Holiday for Two: O. G. Hughes, 28 Upper Craigs, Stirling: WHAT WE STAND FOR—CHALLENGES "STAND AND DELIVER!"

£25 plus Seaside Holiday for Two: J. Morton, 27 Crescent Street, Grimsby: UP AND DOWN THE PEACE—SHIP'S GANGWAY, UNDECIDED WORLD!

£10 plus Seaside Holiday for Two: N. W. Bean, 22 The Crescent, Greenhithe: OVERDOING IT—MAKING GRANDPA PAGEANT'S *Washington*!

OTHER AWARDS: £9: G. A. Corbett, 5 Fairview Avenue, St. Annes-on-Sea: OVERDOING IT — WHEN "PLAN" BECOMES "*Master.*" £8: Mrs. D. Kingston, 35 Wilmington Road, Quinton, Birmingham: UP AND DOWN THE STAIRS—KIDS—MOTHER'S "DOWN," UPSTAIRS. £7: S. T. Morgan, 108 Queen Street, Cardiff: CHINA'S TRAINER — BACKER — AND "RIDER," STALIN. £6: Mrs. E. Wratten, 176 Leyton Road, Stratford, E.15: AT DEAD MAN'S GULCH—CONSTERNATION — SHERIFF'S GUITAR STOLEN! £5: H. J. Cox, "Rylstone," Lawn Close, Datchet, Slough: CHINA'S

Continued in previous column

CASH AND HOLIDAYS FOR XWORDS!

This Way To Win

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one, two or three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues **XWORD 745**

3. All over the country you'll find old paintings adorning them
5. The better a first-class cricketer is, the greater his chances of getting plenty of these
8. A really good one strengthens the hand of boxing promoter
10. One finds it natural to dodge
13. We can understand timid person being frightened by
15. Even if a speaker does this, he may not do it on purpose

Down Clues

1. Not a sensible thing on which to spend money
2. Cloth should not do this badly
4. In which children often find a healthy outlet for their energies
6. One may well be heartened to know his work is appreciated
7. May prove too small when brought to table
9. The bigger one is, the more heavily it is likely to be taxed
11. Most people will recognize it if it's hit
12. May be made to look small when plucked
14. When hubby has a day off and stays at home, he may perhaps get in this

£100 1st Prize plus SEASIDE WEEK for TWO

If First Prize is shared by two readers, *both* will receive Holiday for Two Award. Cash to winners unable to take Holiday in 1951 or 1952.

AWARDS VALUE £25

amongst 1st Runners-up and up to

50 FOOD PARCELS

Useful extras for larder with each Runners-up Award value 10s. or over—also valuable 52-WEEK XWORD SEASON TICKET if parcel won with entry value not less than 2s. Up to 500 "Signpost" Prizes for 2nd Runners-up.

£100 and HOLIDAYS WON—XWORD 740

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 1, Vast. 3, Case. 5, Spiked. 9, Fag. 10, Mines. 11, Zone. 12, Shell. DOWN: 2, Spend. 4, Nave. 6, Sinking. 7, Pars. 8, Vain. 10, Mole. 12, Gull. 13, Gab or Gas.

WINNER of £100 AND HOLIDAY FOR TWO: C. D. Harvey, 1 Brooklands Cottages, Cattawade Street, Manningtree, Essex.

Awards value £25 for 1st Runners-up shared by 37 entrants who also receive Food Parcels. "Signpost" Prizes to 2nd Runners-up.

HARRY HOPKINS REPORTS FROM THE FAR EAST

Continued from page 9

not to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. Hongkong business men take high risks, face big losses if they don't come off. Anyway, old man, if you put the income tax up, only the Europeans would pay it. All Chinese firms keep two sets of books. . . ."

They are excellent excuses. But one does feel a little sympathy with, say, the Director of Education, a sincere idealist, who proposes to combat Communism in the schools by teaching civics.

Hongkong, in fact, is an exception to all the approved colonial patterns. Hongkong is a shop—a shop where both assistants and buyers live in; a shop, furthermore, on a lease—with a landlord who may any day decide to foreclose. And this is a shop of which the management is firmly British. Once there was an ordinance which stated that no Chinese could live above the 750-ft. contour of the Peak. Then, before the war, moving with the democratic times, Hongkong rewrote its famous ordinance to read that permission must be sought. In fact, it was granted only to one Chinese.

"Now," explains Mr. Cassidy, "all that has gone. There is no colour bar in Hongkong today. It's true that the Hongkong Club doesn't have Chinese members, but you can take them in as guests, though few people do. But the golf club has forty or fifty Chinese members. The cricket club is still closed—but that's only because it would be swamped."

Though Hongkong is, in number, an almost wholly Chinese city, the Chinese continue to occupy an entirely subordinate position in its governmental machine. And they are well content to have it so. The able Chinese who comes to Hongkong does so not to govern or work in an office, but to trade and grow rich. He does not yearn to vote. He doesn't want to mind anybody else's business; only his own.

Philosophy—And Grenades

Two forces run the Hongkong shop: the great "hongs," who own most of the valuable land, buildings, warehouses and transport lines, whose hereditary chiefs—"the blood royal"—sit on the Governor's councils, whose multifarious revenues provide the public funds; and the police, who keep order in the shop. They are a remarkable body of men, bearing resolutely and cheerfully a responsibility of quite frightening proportions: four thousand men ruling two million by a mixture of "information received"—and well paid for—and a discreet, unrelenting show of force.

Its leaders, picked, able men, lecture you on political philosophy, the distinctions between liberty and licence, and the function of the police in a democratic society—and keep their gas grenades ready under the seats of their radio trucks.

It is not exactly what the Commonwealth theorists ordered. But once again Hongkong has an answer that it is not easy to argue with. I found it, among other places, on the long squatter inquiry forms filled out by Mr. Lam Hoi-Chaung, chief of the Government's squatter screening team. The stories the forms told were of penury, of fantastic overcrowding, of desperation. But the punch-line at the end was always the same: "Desire for repatriation, nil."

NEXT WEEK: I go on an anti-smuggling patrol. Hongkong looks to its defence

EXAMPLE ..... 6d.
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EX. ..... 6d.
B.
EX. ..... 6d.
B.
EX.
B. } EXTRA TWO FOR 6d.
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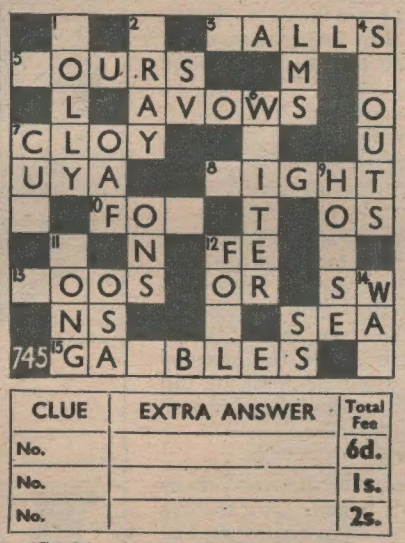

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
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No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

Puzzle and Form strictly copyright **745** Closing Postmark MON., JULY 30

I enclose P.O. value..... No.....
Signed.....
Address.....
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In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.). Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.) and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated August 11.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

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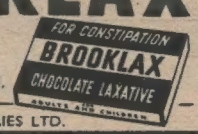

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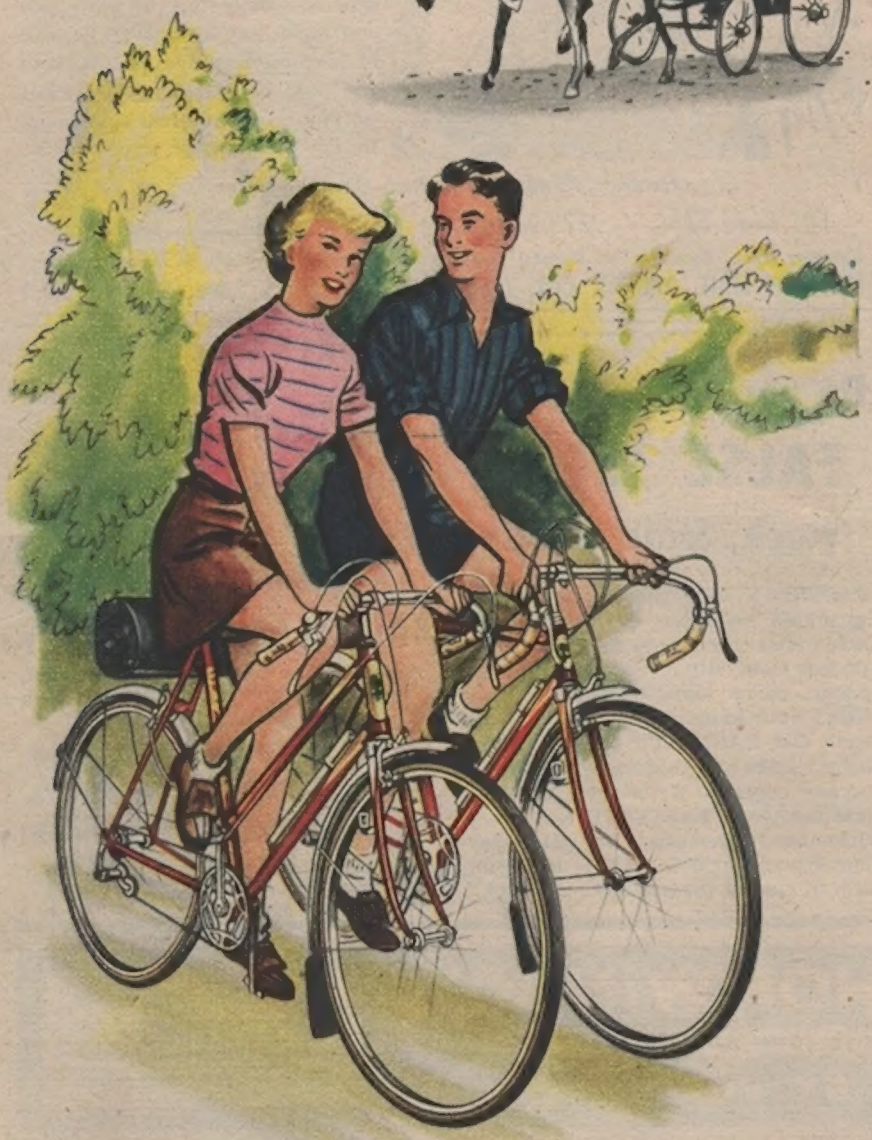

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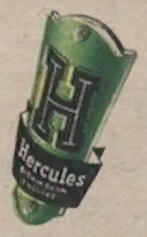

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Peak week peas meant 5,000,000 helpings!

Choice freshly picked peas pouring in to the C.W.S Canning Factories at Lowestoft. Tons of them. Plump, luscious, first grade peas, from some of the finest growing areas in the country. Canned at once they retain that wonderful first bloom of field freshness that makes C.W.S Canned Garden Peas such a delicious, mouth-watering treat. In the peak week of the 1950 fresh garden pea season over 1,000,000 cans of peas were produced. The whole five weeks of the season saw 850 acres tinned. During the remainder of the year nearly 5,000 acres of peas were canned as Processed Peas.

Peas, of course, are only one of the fine foods from the C.W.S Lowestoft factories canning the harvests of field and sea. For there coastal and fishing vessels come right alongside with their cargoes. There, too, the most up-to-date, hygienic methods for cooking and canning will be found.

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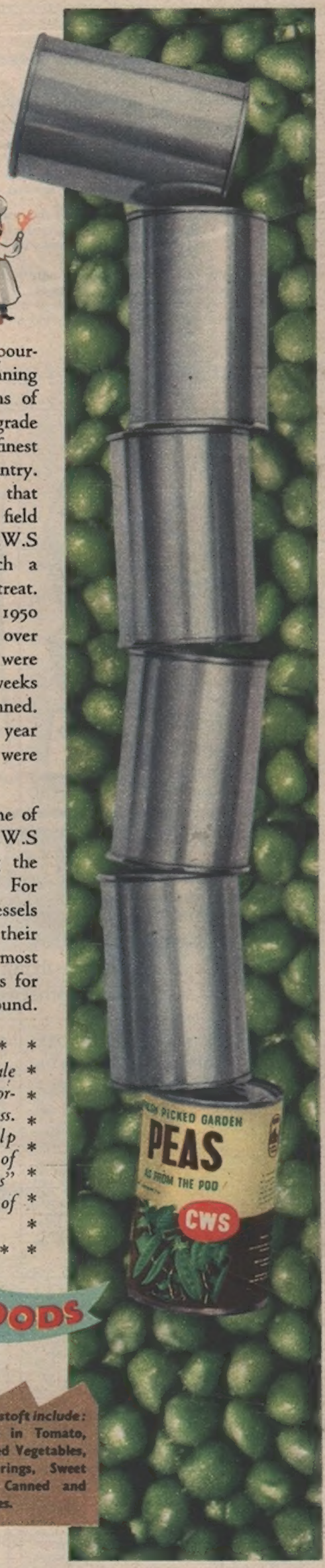
* *The Co-operative Wholesale* *
* *Society with nearly 200 factor-* *
* *ies is Britain's biggest business.* *
* *And C.W.S goods help* *
* *millions to cut their cost of* *
* *living, for C.W.S "profits"* *
* *are shared in the shape of* *
* *dividend.* *
* * * * * * * * * * *



CWS FINE FOODS

C.W.S Waveney products from Lowestoft include: Peas (Fresh and Processed), Beans in Tomato, Runner Beans, Carrots, Beetroot, Mixed Vegetables, Spaghetti in Tomato, Soups, Herrings, Sweet Puddings, Fish and Meat Pastes, Canned and Cooked Meats, Meat Pies and Sausages.

C·W·S

BESIDES CANNED FOODS
THE C.W.S PRODUCES ALMOST EVERYTHING ELSE NEEDED IN THE HOME